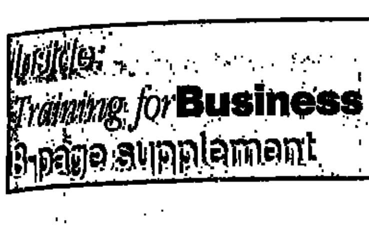
Inside: *Training for* **Business** 8-page supplement





Vol 158, No 10
Week ending March 8, 1998

Kosovo tension unnerves West

Ian Black in London and AP in Pristina

FEARS of a new Balkan flashpoint mounted on Monday after Serbian police used tear gas, water cannon and clubs to disperse thousands of protesters demonstrating in Kosovo against the killing last weekend of 16 ethnic Albanians.

Western governments expressed alarm at violence that has heightened long-standing fears of all-out war in the southern province, which borders Albania and is seeking autonomy from Serbia, the dominant republic in Yugoslavia.

Scores of demonstrators were chased and clubbed as they tried to flee police blocking their route to the centre of the capital, Pristina. Western eyewitnesses said the intervention was brutal.

A crowd of about 30,000 shook their fists at a police helicopter hovering overhead and chanted: "We'll give our lives, but we won't give up Kosovo."

Britain led European Union governments in condemning the violence and hinted that if it continued the West could impose further sanctions on the former Yugoslavia. Its Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, was expected to make his concern public when he visits Sarajevo this week. The warning from Britain, as president of the EU, carries weight.

Concern has been mounting for weeks that the Yugoslav president, Slobodan Milosevic, might be poised to crack down in Kosovo, taking advantage of the distraction of international attention by the Iraq crisis. There are fears that fighting in Kosovo could spill into Macedonia and Albania and risk involving Greece and Bulgaria.

Last Sunday the United States expressed concern and appealed for restraint, while Britain's ambassador to Belgrade issued a similar call and sent a diplomat to Pristina to monitor the situation. But Mr Milosevic warned the West not to interfere.

Serbian police said last weekend's clashes in a troublesome area west of Pristina were prompted by an ethnic Albanian "terrorist" group, known as the Kosovo Liberation Army, which is fighting for an independent state. Ethnic Albanians claimed the police attacked unarmed civilians.

In the past few months KLA rebels have overrun more than a dozen police stations, carrying off scores of automatic weapons. They have attacked police patrols and checkpoints and claim to be responsible for the assassination of more than 50 Serbian policemen and officials, as well as of ethnic Albanians suspected of collaborating with the Serbian authorities.

Serbs have started fleeing the region. The postal authorities have halted their service to 33 towns where the rebels operate. Serbian enclaves and towns have set up barricades with armed guards at night. Police checkpoints are now surrounded by sandbags and protected by snipers on the roofs of nearby buildings. Nearly all police officers carry assault rifles and wear bulletproof vests.

Senior diplomats from the EU were expected to meet in Brussels on Tuesday to discuss possible measures. Some sanctions against Belgrade were lifted after the 1995 Dayton peace agreement that ended the war in Bosnia. But an "outer wall" of sanctions denying former Yugoslavia access to international financial institutions and badly needed Western credits remains in place.



A Serbian policeman clashes with a demonstrator in Kosovo's capital, Pristina, as thousands of ethnic Albanians protest at the killing of 16 people last weekend PHOTOGRAPH: [illegible]

The bloodshed in Kosovo also brought protests in the Albanian capital Tirana and in London, where ethnic Albanians gathered to urge Britain to act.

Britain wants to restart a dialogue between Kosovo and Belgrade and supports enhanced autonomy status — though not full independence — for the province.

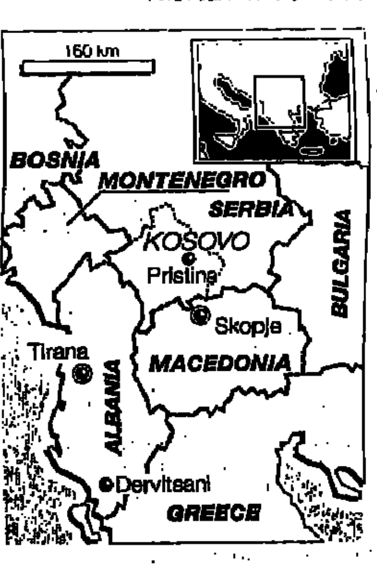
Ninety per cent of the 2 million people of Kosovo are ethnic Albanians. Tension has been high since Serbia revoked its autonomy and introduced virtual martial law in 1989.

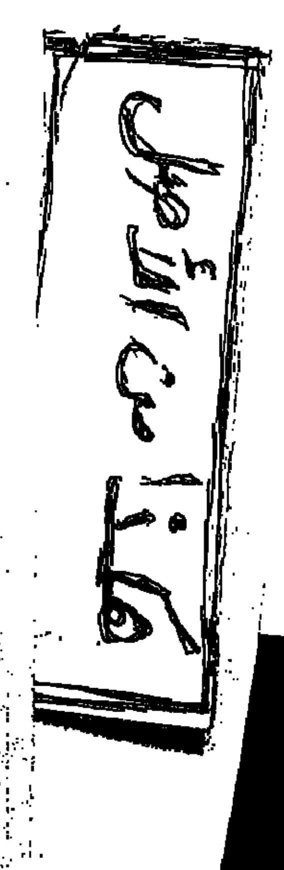
Since late last year Nato has feared that Kosovo could be the most dangerous flashpoint in the Balkans. Its council has been getting weekly intelligence briefings on the deteriorating situation.

Last week a US special envoy, Robert Gelbard, visited Pristina to try to broker talks between Mr Milosevic and the moderate ethnic Albanian leader Ibrahim Rugova, notably on implementing an agreement on Albanian-language education. A Franco-German initiative last November to promote autonomy negotiations was angrily rebuffed by the Yugoslav president.

The six-nation Contact Group, which steers the peace process in Bosnia, said last week that it was concerned at the continuing lack of dialogue over Kosovo.

Albania unrest, page 4





Authors quit in revolt against Murdoch

Kamal Ahmed

PRESSURE was growing on senior management at HarperCollins this week after two authors announced that they were quitting the publisher.

The political commentator Simon Heffer had agreed to write the definitive work on the late Enoch Powell for HarperCollins, but said he had pulled out of the deal after the publisher dropped a book by Chris Patten, the last British governor of Hong Kong.

Mr Heffer was followed on Monday by Jonathan Power, author of a book celebrating 40 years of Amnesty International. The book contains passages critical of China's human rights record and attitude to free speech in a chapter written by Wei Jingsheng, the leading voice of opposition to the regime in Beijing.

Mr Power could no longer work with a publisher which, he said, put the interests of its proprietor, Rupert Murdoch, above the freedom of authors to write their own opinions.

"I did not want to be associated with a company that has treated Chris Patten in the way it has," said Mr Power, former foreign editor of the International Herald Tribune and respected writer on human rights issues. "It seems that free speech and Mr Murdoch are now a total contradiction."

Mr Heffer was the first author to break his links with the publisher, although a number of others have expressed concern at the publisher's decision — taken after its owner, Rupert Murdoch, expressed "dissatisfaction" with Mr Patten's book, which contains passages critical of China.

Mr Murdoch has important media interests in China and is hoping to expand there rapidly in the next two years.

Mr Patten, whose book East And West will now be published by Macmillan, added to the crisis at HarperCollins by questioning Mr Murdoch's commitment to free speech and saying that John Major, the former prime minister, who has sold the rights to his memoirs to the publisher, expressed his "concern and sympathy" over the affair.

HarperCollins has refused to comment on the dispute, which has rocked the publishing world. Its chairman, Eddie Bell, and managing director of the trade division, Adrian Bourne, were both involved in the decision.

Mr Heffer wrote in the Sunday Telegraph: "I do not wish to have my good name as a writer tarnished by association with a company that behaves with such massive impropriety."

Authors Doris Lessing, Sir Frank Kermode and Booker Prize winner Penelope Fitzgerald have said they were considering ending their contracts with HarperCollins after Stuart Proffitt, its much respected editor-in-chief, resigned last week over the dispute.

Mr Patten said the publisher's decision revealed Mr Murdoch's attitude towards free speech. Referring to the campaign against privacy legislation in Murdoch-owned newspapers, including the Times and the Sun, Mr Patten said: "I don't see how you can be in favour of free speech in one part of the world and less keen on it in another."

Kow-tow factor, page 12

Austria	AS30	Malta	50c
Belgium	BF80	Netherlands	G 6
Denmark	DK17	Norway	NK 16
Finland	FM 10	Portugal	E300
France	FF 14	Saudi Arabia	SR 6.50
Germany	DM 4	Spain	P 300
Greece	DR 500	Sweden	SK 19
Italy	L 3,500	Switzerland	SF 3.80

Arab world irked by West's double standards

CHRISTOPHER FRYER (February 22) may not be one of Thatcher's "hard-edged" children, but if he knows about United States military intervention in Grenada, Beirut, Somalia and Indochina, then he would do well to extend his understanding of history to the role of the West in Southwest Asia as a whole, rather than simply Lebanon.

Saddam Hussein was backed by the West and conservative Arab states during the 1980s in the war against Iran; he was armed by the West (US, UK, France, Germany) largely on the basis of oil for technology; and those same governments kept quiet about his earlier human rights abuses despite protests by human rights groups.

What irks the Arab states today is the West's double standards. While they condemn Iraq, they stay silent when Israel maintains a secret nuclear weapons programme, occupies southern Lebanon, and permits further illegal settlements on Palestinian territory.

Saddam Hussein is a thug, but it's no good just using him as a convenient target for the latest US hi-tech weapons. First, we have to ask who sold him his technology in the first place, and then we have to stop being selective about aggressors and human rights abuses around the world. To understand the present, you have to understand the past, particularly when it comes to the Middle East and the politics of oil.
Peter D Jones,
Lenah Valley, Tasmania, Australia

YOU state that the agreement between the United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan and the Iraqi regime has dealt a blow to the leaders of Iraqi opposition (Clinton puts Iraq on trial over deal, March 1). This is not true. The fact is that most of the Iraqi opposition groups, including the Iraqi Democratic Movement, have welcomed the agreement as a victory for ordinary Iraqi people.

It is vital that international pressure should be exerted on the Iraqi regime to respect UN resolutions and dismantle chemical and biological weapons. Saddam Hussein has once again gambled with the fate of the Iraqi people when it was possible to accept at an earlier date the international proposals to defuse the crisis. The crisis has also shown that he is prepared to sacrifice the last Iraqi in order to remain in power.
Dr Mohamed Al-Rubeai,
Iraqi Democratic Movement,
Woodford, Essex

MARTIN WOOLLACOTT says: "We will have avoided a bad war only in order to make a bad peace" (Middle East has no cause to rejoice, March 1). What could a "good" war be, exactly?
Margaret Melicharova,
Kings Lynn, Norfolk

DOES Martin Woollacott actually want full-scale US-led military intervention in the Gulf? The kindling for the Iraqi crises of the 1990s is this bizarre demonisation of Saddam Hussein as a "uniquely evil man"; rather, he appears to be one of many cruel dictators — nothing special. Think of 10 bad rulers from the last 50 years: is Saddam Hussein an order of magnitude worse than them all?

There is no shame in a "bad peace": it is part of being human to accept undesirable but workable outcomes to our actions and try to improve them.
Nick Drake,
Southampton

I WAS shocked and alarmed to read that a clear majority of the British public backs UK involvement in military action against Iraq (Most Britons back air raids on Iraq, February 15). What was especially distressing was the fact that my own age group (18-24) were the strongest backers for such a devastating act of violence.

Don't the figures for the over-65 age group suggest something? That those who have experienced war and its repercussions would not like to see it repeated. I understand the problems that Iraq has created, but as many have stated, it is not Saddam Hussein who will be directly affected by such military action but Iraqi civilians, who appear to have no control in the workings of their government.
Rachel Kernaghan,
Miyazaki, Japan

Free air, but not free power

I AGREE with Chris Jones that compressed air is reliable, but "beautifully efficient" it is not (February 15). While the air may be free, compression is expensive. A typical compressed air plant delivers only 15 per cent of its input energy to the air-powered devices. The rest goes to waste heat during compression or leaks in the delivery system. Furthermore almost all air compressors are electric. A good, modern power plant is about 40 per cent efficient, bringing the efficiency of the system with respect to primary energy down to about 6 per cent. An internal combustion engine can be more than 20 per cent efficient.

The main advantage of using compressed-air-powered taxis in Mexico City is that it moves the emissions from the exhaust pipes of thousands of vehicles to the smokestacks of a few power plants. Point sources of pollution are easier to clean up than non-point sources. Thus this may be the best environmental choice for this application.

For other situations, however, other technologies will be better, including hybrid-electric vehicles, natural gas and, for a while yet, the dirty old internal-combustion engine and "that white elephant, the electric car".
Dave Shipley,
Energy Centre of Wisconsin,
Madison, Wisconsin, USA

Prayer with Greek roots

ACCORDING to Madeleine Bunting (Church offers Lord's Prayer in two forms, February 22) the modern-language version of the Our Father "is closer to the Hebrew". This is news indeed: so the "Hebrew (ie, Aramaic) Matthew" Jerome claims to have seen exists after all! The new version is closer to the Greek original, although "hallowed be" can hardly be thought modern language, and "from evil" overlooks the widely held scholarly opinion that *tou ponerou* is not the neuter, but the masculine (the Evil One). Despite these concessions to tradition, it is little wonder that conservative Christians are resistant; the same fate befell Jerome's Psalter according to the Hebrew, which was bumped from the Vulgate by the beloved Old Itala, howlers and all.
D Martin Jenni,
University of Iowa, Iowa, USA

Coming to the aid of Tibet

WHILE any publicity about the devastating snows in Tibet is welcome, Maggie O'Kane's article (The freezing hell that is Shangri-La, February 22) was marred by its patronising tone and many inaccuracies. Like many other Western writers she likes to perpetuate the image of a "gentle Buddhist Tibet".

Maggie O'Kane's Tibetans are yeti-fearing nomads tending their buffaloes (presumably they traded up their yaks for the American species), who like nothing more than a bowl of butter tea round the dung fire. While the rest of Asia is allowed to aspire to a modern and comfortable lifestyle, Tibetans only elicit sympathy while they cling to their animal skins and woollen boots.

The article would also have us believe that Northern Tibet is a mountainous Shangri-La, when in fact most of it is a barren plateau of rolling hills. James Hilton's mythical Shangri-La was actually based on the mountainous canyons of northern Yunnan where the Salween, Mekong and Yangste rivers run in parallel.

And, predictably, the answer to Tibet's disaster is Western aid. The Han Chinese may be indifferent to the plight of Tibet, but the international aid agencies would surely bring their own agendas as well as a free lunch. What Tibetan farmers really need is a longer term strategy to cope with their changing climate — perhaps this might include yak (sorry, buffalo) T-bone steak finding a niche market on the depleted shelves of the British butcher.
Michael Woodhead,
Ashfield, NSW, Australia

Caught in a speed trap

YOUR February 8 edition contains two different abbreviations for kilometres per hour, both of them wrong. The first attempt, kph, scores one out of three. Under accepted international usage, "k" alone means nothing, "p" means pico, which has nothing to do with it, "h" means hour.

The second attempt, kmh, comes closer: "km" is the correct symbol for kilometres, while "h" is the correct symbol for hour. It needs an oblique, or forward slash, signifying "per" to make it complete: km/h.

This symbol is part of internationally accepted metric usage as specified by the Systeme Internationale d'Unites. This is the outfit that gave us degrees Celsius to replace centigrade because France argued that centigrade, having two meanings, would be confusing. Who's the only country still using degrees centigrade? *Vraiment!* Yes, we could have done without this, but after 20 years, let's at least get it right.
David J Baker,
Arlington, Virginia, USA

We will aim to standardise on "kmh", unless readers report widespread use of the clumsier "km/h". — Editor

Briefly

JOHN HOOPER argues that Italians favour the euro because they have little faith in domestic politicians and institutions and that this is because they are all rather immature (Saving Italy from itself, February 22).

In reality, Italians have two preoccupations: first, they do not want to be marooned on the southern periphery of a European Union whose centre of gravity is gradually moving further northwards. And second, they see the euro as a valuable insurance against the secessionist movements that threaten to Balkanise the country. It is hard to see what is immature about that.
(Prof) David Alexander,
San Casciano, Firenze, Italy

PERHAPS a solution to the Nigerian scam (February 15) would be to criminalise those who succumb to the invitation to illegal conspiracy. They obviously enter into it with criminal intent and, therefore, deserve no sympathy.
Duncan Cross,
Wolverhampton, West Midlands

IS BILL CLINTON a fan of Jimi Hendrix as Leah K Hampton (February 22) suggests? I am of Generation X too, but, unlike Ms Hampton, I think such a taste in music is an excellent reason to vote for somebody. It indicates an appreciation of life, love and artistic expression unusual in a politician. Given his bellicose attitude to Iraq, I doubt it is true.
Bryn Reade,
Auckland, New Zealand

LEAH K HAMPTON'S letter about President Clinton seemed balanced and generous. What a pity it was ruined by this phrase: "as a twenty-something who is genuinely exhausted with her parents' pathetic laments about their fading vivacity". The message is that presidents can be forgiven for having failings but not parents. How sad and immature.
Jane O'Hara,
London

NOW weapons of mass destruction are out of the way, I assume that we can get back to the serious issues of the day, ie matters of mass seduction and Bill Clinton's flies.
John Sheeran,
Cheltenham, Gloucs

YOU report Alex Salmond as suggesting that Sean Connery's views on violence towards women had been "taken out of context" (March 1). Perhaps Mr Salmond would care to supply a context likely to make such views acceptable?
Donald Sharp,
Dunblane, Perthshire

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Indian voters fail to pick clear winner

Suzanne Goldenberg in New Delhi

THE Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party and its allies on Monday surged tantalisingly close to power in early results from India's general elections. However, the BJP's failure to secure an outright majority means that the next government will emerge only after days of feverish political machinations.

The BJP had captured or was leading in 237 seats in the 545-seat Lok Sabha or lower house of parliament, according to early results and trends from the independent New Delhi Television network.

The Congress party and its partners were leading in 159 seats. Congress had hoped that Sonia Gandhi, the latest claimant to India's legendary political dynasty, would return it to its former glory as the traditional party of governance.

Although the outgoing United Front prime minister, I K Gujral, easily won his seat in Punjab, his regional leftwing United Front alliance suffered a severe setback. The alliance was leading in 98 seats, 68 fewer than it won in the last election in 1996, and Mr Gujral's Janata Dal was facing oblivion after heavy losses in the southern state of Karnataka, northern Bihar and eastern Orissa.

The full picture was not expected to emerge until later this week. However, it seemed certain on Monday that India's next government would be a product of backroom political manipulations rather than a translation of the aspirations of the 330 million who cast their votes.

Even if the Congress and the United Front join forces to stop the BJP, they cannot muster a majority. That means the next government can emerge only after partnerships have been broken and remade, either through political inducements or cash. Both the Congress and the United Front claim to uphold India's secular ideals, but they are divided enough to frustrate an alliance. The attention now shifts to nearly 20 other MPs, who have no declared allegiance and who will be crucial to the formation of any government.

The BJP alliance appeared to owe its success more to the gains made by its new partners than to its own performance. After its candidate for prime minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, ruled for only 13 days in 1996, the party forged regional alliances that raised its tally by 54 seats compared with 1996.

Although the BJP's leaders said they were cheered by its breakthrough in southern India, the party was hounded out of its traditional strongholds in the west, losing badly in Maharashtra and Rajasthan.

The BJP alliance's gains in the south — which had previously shunned its muscular approach towards India's Muslim minority — were perhaps the most surprising outcome of these elections. The results herald a remarkable comeback for J Jayalalitha, the former chief minister of the southern state of Tamil Nadu. Ms Jayalalitha, a former film star, was thrown out in the last election amid allegations of corruption on a monumental scale.

The outcome also confounded predictions that Ms Gandhi could single-handedly bring the Congress to within striking distance of a majority. The BJP had been severely rattled by Ms Gandhi, who stepped into active politics after nearly seven years in the shadows since the assassination of her husband, prime minister Rajiv Gandhi.

It appeared on Monday that while the heir to the family firm which has governed India for more than 40 of the 50 years since independence had saved the Congress from disaster, her powers were limited.

In the past six weeks she travelled more than 55,000km, addressing 141 rallies. Ms Gandhi had been coy about her intentions after the elections. It appears that her prime ministerial ambitions and those of her daughter, Priyanka, will be on hold for now.

Schröder gets Kohl in his sights

Ian Traynor in Bonn

GERMANY'S most popular opposition figure, Gerhard Schröder, took a giant step towards unseating Chancellor Helmut Kohl last Sunday when he was named as the Social Democrats' candidate for the chancellorship after scoring a stunning victory in elections in the northern state of Lower Saxony.

"The Kohl era is over. This signal has been made clear," said a beaming Mr Schröder. "The desire for a change in Bonn is running deep."

Seeking a third term as prime minister of Lower Saxony, Mr Schröder surprised pundits by increasing his share of the vote by more than 3 per cent. His victory reversed a three-year trend of diminishing support for the Social Democrats (SPD) and was the party's best result in the state. It was seen as a personal blow for Mr Kohl, who had devoted considerable time to campaigning in the state on behalf of his Christian Democratic party (CDU).

Franz Müntefering, the SPD party manager in Bonn, immediately announced that Mr Schröder had clinched the chancellorship nomination, defeating Oskar Lafontaine, the SPD leader, in the contest to lead the charge against Mr Kohl on September 27.

Asked about the September election, Mr Schröder said: "We have a good chance." But, he said, Mr Kohl remained a dangerous opponent. "I have never underestimated Helmut Kohl. We haven't beaten him yet."

Mr Schröder launched his challenge by declaring bluntly that the single European currency could work only if Europe was united in a single political entity. But he indicated that he would not seek to turn the euro into a campaign issue.

He is not renowned for his advocacy of European political integration, and Monday's declaration may be the first of many U-turns he performs in the months of campaigning to end Mr Kohl's 16 years in power.

Comment, page 12



New Year spirit . . . Police keep watch as Buddhist monks take part in a ceremony last week at Lama temple in Beijing to mark the Tibetan New Year PHOTO: GREG BAKER

Swiss spy case hits Netanyahu

David Sharrock in Jerusalem

THE government of Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, was thrown back into crisis last week as Switzerland demanded an apology for having to play unwilling host to a failed Mossad operation.

The Swiss authorities said they had uncovered a "suspected spying action" by the Israeli secret service last month, involving telephone bugging in a building on the outskirts of the capital Berne.

Carla del Ponte, the Swiss attorney-general, speaking at a press conference in Berne, said one person was in custody and four others were wanted.

Mr Netanyahu confirmed that an Israeli citizen had been arrested in Switzerland. "We are dealing with this through the embassy and the foreign ministry," he said. "I have nothing to add."

Mystery cloaks the operation, but three men broke into the basement of a building near Berne while two suspected accomplices waited in front, Mrs Del Ponte's office said.

The Israeli daily Yediot Ahronot said the incident involved an attempt to bug offices of the Lebanese guerrilla group Hizbullah in the Iranian mission to the UN in Geneva, nearly a two-hour drive from Berne and far from Berne police jurisdiction.

The Israelis were spotted by a resident who alerted the Berne canton (state) police force. The police released four after routine checks, the statement said, having no reason to hold them because there was no indication that they were involved in espionage. The fifth suspect was arrested for carrying suspicious objects, police said.

Mrs Del Ponte has issued a warrant for the arrest of the four Israelis released a week ago, but they are believed to have left Switzerland.

The Swiss had already received an apology, sent immediately after Israel discovered that its agents' cover was blown. Secret negotiations to secure the return of the last man, away from the glare of publicity, were also taking place.

But once the story was leaked, the Swiss were forced to play a different game. They called a press conference and demanded a similar apology to that given to Canada last year when two Mossad agents carrying false Canadian passports were captured in Jordan trying to kill a prominent official of the militant Islamic Palestinian group Hamas.

The crisis comes as Mr Netanyahu tries to placate King Hussein of Jordan after the resignation of the Mossad chief, Danny Yatom, chiefly blamed in an Israeli report for the bungled murder attempt in Jordan.

Israel and Switzerland had been negotiating quietly to end the Berne affair. But it seems senior Mossad officials leaked details in their campaign to oust Mr Yatom.

● Israel raised the prospect last weekend of finally pulling its troops out of south Lebanon, when Mr Netanyahu said he had "no qualms" about dismantling its self-declared security zone.

The Week

PRESIDENT Suharto of Indonesia has decided to breach his agreement with the IMF. He said that the painful reforms demanded in return for a $43 billion rescue package were failing to reverse economic meltdown. Le Monde, page 20

THE Cambodian government run by Hun Sen, and his ousted co-prime minister, Prince Norodom Ranariddh, jointly called a ceasefire to end seven months of hostilities and open the way for elections.

THE Zapatista guerrilla leadership has been sidelined by the Mexican interior minister. Francisco Labastida plans to kick start the Chiapas peace talks by negotiating directly with the civilian opposition.

SOUTH AFRICANS seeking a new start are being encouraged to settle in Tasmania, Australia. In response to population decline brought on by recession a task force has been set up to entice settlers to the island.

[illegible] authorities arrested 40 people for allegedly plotting to assassinate the country's military leaders and bomb government buildings and foreign embassies.

THE Jewish settler population in the West Bank and Gaza Strip reached 161,157 in 1997, a 9 per cent increase on 1996, Israel's interior ministry said. The high birth rate accounted for about two-thirds of the increase.

GREECE says it will veto enlargement of the European Union if Cyprus is not included among its first new members. Talks on the entry of Cyprus, divided into the internationally recognised Greek sector and a Turkish breakaway region, are due to begin this month.

CITING gains in Colombia's war on drugs, the US secretary of state, Madeline Albright, said the administration had decided to waive two-year old sanctions against the country due to an "effective eradication and interdiction effort" by Bogotá.

THE Turkish government has backed away from confrontation with Islamists over its ban on headscarves in schools and colleges. After protest marches the government has said the rule will not be strictly enforced.

THE Russian government said that it would bury the remains of Tsar Nicholas II and his family in St Petersburg. Washington Post, page 13

SIR Elton John's tribute to the late Princess Diana, Candle in the Wind, has won a Grammy award, the highest honour in the US music industry. The song is the best-selling single of all time.

Iraq élite rides high despite sanctions

Julian Borger in Baghdad

AMID the belching traffic on Baghdad's roads, the only new cars belong to the police. The gleaming Korean Hyundais sweep past skinny street children hawking cigarette lighters and long lines of unemployed graduates selling their textbooks at the kerb.

In the eyes of many aid workers and diplomats, the shiny police cars symbolise what is wrong with the current international sanctions policy. "It enhances the leadership; it diminishes the people," said a demoralised senior United Nations administrator. "It doesn't work."

A humanitarian "oil-for-food" programme adopted by the UN Security Council in 1995 to fend off mass starvation has failed to eliminate widespread malnutrition and child mortality. Negotiations are under way to expand the programme, but aid workers argue it will be too little and too late to heal the long-term damage to civil society.

The consequence, they argue, will be an even more radical, anti-Western state, long after President Saddam Hussein's demise.

UN sources say the police [illegible] for oil in a sanctions-busting deal with South Korea last year. The oil was probably smuggled out in small tankers that ply between the Gulf states. The cars — more than 100 — could have arrived by ship or through the porous borders with Jordan and Iran.

Trade along the main smuggling routes is said to be a monopoly of the Iraqi leadership and their relatives, in particular the president's two sons, Uday and Qusay. Around them, a clique of wealthy sanctions busters has gathered. Only they can afford Baghdad's still bustling restaurants where a meal, at $16 a head, represents several months' wages for most people.

Most of the population exist on the rations distributed under the food-for-oil programme. Iraq is allowed to sell $2 billion of oil every six months. Of the proceeds, 30 per cent goes to pay reparations for the 1991 Gulf war, and most of the rest pays for food and medicine distributed under UN supervision.

But the influx of basic supplies has not been sufficient to keep malnutrition and disease under control. UN aid workers cannot confirm Iraqi claims that more than a million children have died from sanctions, but according to their own surveys at least 13 per cent of children aged under five suffer from chronic malnutrition, with irreparable effects on their growth and mental abilities.

Denis Halliday, the UN's humanitarian co-ordinator in Iraq, said: "You have generations of young Iraqis coming up, some of whom have these nutritional difficulties, others are at schools where the system has collapsed. There's a huge potential for young people not being able to grow into useful citizens."

Western diplomats blame much of the disaster on the Iraqi government, which blocked the original oil for food programme for more than a year. Once it was agreed, the government switched expenditure from its own food and health programmes to other uses, such as police cars and the construction of more palaces for President Saddam.

But the profound suspicion of some UN member states, mainly the United States and Britain, has also checked the flow of food and medicines. Last year the UN sanc[illegible] blocked the import of cotton for hospital sheets because it said it might have military uses. Only 39 of 100 French ambulances ordered early last year have so far materialised. At one point the committee also blocked pencils for schools, arguing that their graphite content could have had a "dual use".

A UN resolution passed last month will raise Iraq's six-monthly oil exports to $5.2 billion, allowing food imports to increase by two-thirds and medical supplies to be almost quadrupled. Baghdad has yet to agree to the new deal.

Mr Halliday suspects that even increased rations may be insufficient to halt child malnutrition. "That would require a significant focus on infants, on potable water, proper feeding techniques and so on," he said.

It is hard to find a diplomat or aid worker in Baghdad who will make a case for sanctions, other than a shrugging concession that, even after seven years of failure to dislodge President Saddam, there appears to be no ready alternative.

Washington Post, page 13
Le Monde, page 19



Surreal landscape . . . A traditional British phone box lies half-buried by volcanic ash whipped up by high winds last week and dumped in the deserted Montserrat town of Plymouth PHOTOGRAPH GREGORY/E.U.

Berisha denies role in Albania unrest

Karen Coleman in Tirana

THE former Albanian president Sali Berisha dismissed accusations last Sunday of instigating trouble in the country a year after its [illegible] following the collapse of pyramid investment schemes.

Mr Berisha has been accused of orchestrating instability in the past month in an effort to topple the government and regain control. He said the accusations by his opponents were false. "We strongly condemn any violent gesture, any terrorist gesture, and there will be no support from the Democratic party for that," he said.

The prime minister, Fatos Nano, who was elected last year, has claimed the former president and his party were behind the takeover of the northern town of Shkoder on February 22.

After a Berisha rally, armed gangs took control of the police station and released prisoners. They [illegible] through Shkoder, looting and damaging buildings and setting fire to the library and university. They raided two banks, stealing money from safes.

Special forces regained control the following day. Some residents felt their town was being used as a political football by those interested in fostering instability. "I think this was pre-planned because how can 15 people take over the whole town?" said Spatim Sima, who sells clothes at a dusty roadside in Shkoder.

"This is a political game; one party blames the other, which in turn blames its opponent. But the ordinary people are the ones who are suffering," Fatmir Lushi, a construction worker, said.

The Shkoder events sparked memories of last year's chaos, when [illegible] was in the hands of outlaws who looted shops and arms depots. Violence erupted after thousands lost their savings in pyramid investment schemes. A state of emergency was declared in March, and in April Italian troops arrived to restore order. Elections in June resulted in President Berisha being ousted and a coalition government led by Mr Nano.

Now Mr Berisha, who was on the point of fleeing Albania last year, is trying to make a comeback. His party has held rallies in the capital Tirana, amid calls for fresh elections. They accuse Mr Nano of reneging on promises to compensate those who lost their savings.

General sobs at memory of Rwandan genocide

David Beresford in Cape Town

A CANADIAN general wept before an international genocide hearing in Tanzania last week as he told of his frustration at his inability to stop the slaughter of 800,000 people in Rwanda in 1994.

"You cannot even imagine," retorted General Romeo Dallaire, his voice breaking with emotion when he was asked if he regretted what had happened. "It seems to me unimaginable that every day we saw people being massacred and yet the [world] folded its arms," he added, wiping his eyes with a handkerchief.

The general, who commanded the UN Assistance Mission in Rwanda, at the time of the genocide, took the stand in Arusha after being called as a defence witness by lawyers for a former Rwandan mayor, Jean Paul Akayesu, accused of involvement in the killing of 2,000 people.

The accused, aged 45, from the town of Taba, near the capital, Kigali, faces 12 charges including genocide, murder, rape and torture. He is one of four people accused of genocide before the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. The UN has 23 suspects in custody. No cases have been completed.

Before Gen Dallaire's appearance, judges were told he was forbidden to give evidence about communications between himself and the UN at the time of the killings.

The general, who keeps a hoe — used to hack villagers to death — on the wall of his Ottawa office and is clearly haunted by his experience in Rwanda, is believed to have warned the UN of the impending genocide, and to have pleaded in vain for an intervention to prevent it.

His role in Rwanda during the slaughter is also the subject of controversy. It is alleged that he failed to do enough to protect Belgian paratroopers under his command, 10 of whom were horribly mutilated before being killed by Hutu extremists.

Gen Dallaire has been called as a witness in what is expected to be a defence attempt to show that the deaths in Rwanda were from civil war, not genocide.

He appeared in Canadian military uniform and saluted the judges before removing his beret and taking the oath. Testifying in French, he said he had neither the manpower nor the equipment to halt the slaughter when it began on April 6 1994 — triggered by the downing of a plane carrying Rwanda's Hutu president, Juvenal Habyarimana.

N Korea food crisis 'official'

John Gittings

NORTH Korea issued a grim warning on Monday about severe food shortages, which seems intended to catch the eye of the new South Korean president, Kim Dae-jung. Rations are pitifully low for the North Korean population, the official Korean Central News Agency admitted, with a daily average last month of only 200 grams of grain per person.

It is the first time North Korea has published such detailed figures since the food crisis began with disastrous floods three years ago.

Less than a week ago, in his inaugural speech, President Kim said Seoul would "not be parsimonious in extending food aid to North Korea".

South Korea is still waiting for an official reply to proposals from the president, which include reuniting divided families and an exchange of special envoys that could lead to a summit meeting.

The statement from Pyongyang suggests that North Korea may recognise that Mr Kim, a long-time opponent of previous military regimes in the South, is offering a new opportunity for dialogue.

Comment, page 12

Uneasy UN consensus on Iraq

THE United Nations Security Council gave unanimous backing this week to a resolution warning Iraq of the "severest consequences" should it renege on its agreement to allow UN weapons inspectors unrestricted access to eight "presidential sites", ***writes Mark Tran in New York.***

The warning is designed to give teeth to the secretary-general Kofi Annan's diplomatic breakthrough in Baghdad last week.

The resolution reflects an uneasy compromise between the United States and Britain and the 13 other council members. The two allies wanted a statement allowing the automatic use of force if Baghdad backtracks.

Others insisted that consultations must precede any use of force and the resolution, drafted with much haggling, implies a council debate before force is used.

The US rejected any interpretation that ties its hands on the use of force, an assertion sure to be contested by China, France and Russia in any future crisis.

"This resolution reinforces the US policy of diplomacy backed by force," said Bill Richardson, the US ambassador to the UN.

Iraq has already questioned some aspects of Mr Annan's agreement. Nizar Hamdoon, its ambassador to the UN, said last weekend that UN inspectors at the presidential sites would be subordinate to the diplomats accompanying them — an assertion rebutted by Richard Butler, the chief UN inspector.

Germ of truth amid hysteria

COMMENT
Chris Reed

WHO is most likely to release germs into the New York subway system: a) the two eccentric scientists accused in Las Vegas of carrying deadly anthrax; b) Middle Eastern terrorists; or c) the United States government?

You were right of course — the US government.

In December 1976 the army admitted to Congress that 10 years earlier its bacteriological warfare unit had dropped what is now known to have been pathogenic bacteria, contained in a light bulb, in New York's subway. The purpose was to "monitor the spread of the agent through the tunnels".

This was precisely the method allegedly envisaged by the white supremacist microbiologist Larry Harris, arrested by the FBI last month for having "military grade" anthrax. The FBI alleged that he talked last summer of dropping a globe of toxins in the New York subway that would kill "hundreds of thousands". If he did say that, we know where he got the idea.

The *Serratia marcescens* germs that the army secretly spread in New York are not known to have killed anyone. But on September 27, 1950, the army sprayed the same bacteria from a navy minesweeper off San Francisco Bay. The germ cloud covered 117 square miles containing a population of 1 million, and may have killed at least 13 people who died of a heart valve infection.

The army also used a known pathogen. From 1950-1966 it dumped Serratia or *Aspergillus fumigatus* in Key West and Panama City, Florida, and at army bases in California, Alabama and Pennsylvania, and at the Pentagon. None of this was recalled during the panicky days in Nevada following the arrest of Harris and his colleague William Leavitt.

Nor was the US government's pathogenic history mentioned by the "security experts" who pontificated to the media about the imminent threat of biological terrorism in the US. President Clinton and New York's mayor, Rudolph Giuliani, had to reassure the public. Scary New York tabloid headlines such as "Subway Plague Terror" were blamed.

But it was the FBI's own sworn affidavit, which its head agent in Las Vegas, Bobby Siller, recommended as a source to reporters, that publicised Harris's hearsay remark about a New York subway infestation and how it would be "blamed on the Iraqis".

With Leavitt's naivety and Harris's oddness, they were an easy mark for the FBI's tipster, a "citizen doing his duty". He was actually a twice-convicted extortionist trying to sell for $2 million his Heath Robinson anti-anthrax device, the AZ-58 Ray Tube.

Leavitt and Harris were not terrorists. They did not seek to release anthrax in the US. Terrorists have rarely used it because, contrary to what the experts say, it is difficult to assemble and distribute. Only governments can do that.

The worst modern outbreak of *Bacillus anthracis* was in Sverdlovsk in the USSR in 1979. It killed 66 people. For 15 years the authorities blamed an animal source. Scientists finally revealed that anthrax had leaked from a Soviet germ warfare laboratory.

So, when are all these doom-declaring US officials and experts going to apologise for the alarm they falsely raised? And when will governments cease hiding behind terrorist threats, when they are the true custodians of deadly germ warfare?

Mega troops declare war on neo-Nazis

Denis Staunton in Berlin

POLICE commando units targeted at rightwing extremists in eastern Germany were hailed as a spectacular success last week after arresting 23 people during their first week in operation. The units are known as Mega troops, short for Mobile Units against Violence and Xenophobia.

Armed and equipped with Russian Mi-8 helicopters, the units were established by the Social Democratic state government of Brandenburg to stamp out increasing neo-Nazi violence.

"They are to prevent hooligans gathering and give potential culprits the feeling that the police are always nearby," said Axel Lüdders, head of Brandenburg's criminal investigation agency.

In its first operation, a Mega unit interrupted rightwing youths gathering for survival training at the Wolletzsee, a lake outside Berlin. They arrested 11 people and seized knives, a cosh and Nazi regalia.

The 45 Mega officers, who are usually dressed in plain clothes, have as their emblem a swastika being crushed underfoot by Brandenburg's state symbol of a red eagle. They stopped almost 300 people and 85 vehicles during the first week and are confident that at least one of the 23 arrests will lead to a prosecution.

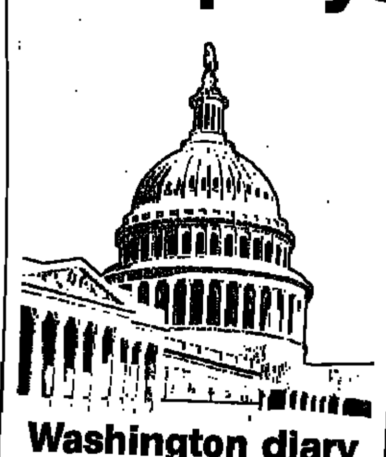
The scale of the problem facing the units was underlined last week when intelligence chiefs disclosed that the number of extreme rightwing attacks in Germany rose by at least 10 per cent last year. Almost half the incidents took place in the formerly communist east, where there are an estimated 45,000 extremists.

Mega units have powers to break up gatherings and seize potentially dangerous objects such as baseball bats. Mr Lüdders is confident of the units' continued success. "We know where these groups are and we know how they spend their free time," he said.

● An American neo-Nazi known as the Farmbelt Führer, who is serving a four-year sentence for violating Germany's tough anti-extremist laws, lost an appeal for early release at Hamburg state court last week. Gary Lauck, aged 44, from Lincoln, Nebraska, was convicted in 1996 of inciting racial hatred by smuggling in extreme rightwing propaganda.

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CIA plays out the same old hand



Washington diary

Martin Kettle

WHEN the facts become too awkward in international conflicts, governments turn to covert operations instead. As if to prove the point, the Central Intelligence Agency turned up on cue last week at the latest climax of the Iraq crisis. Just as Kofi Annan returned to New York with the latest deal between the United Nations and Baghdad, the CIA was revealed to be working on a subversion scheme to topple Saddam Hussein.

It is hardly a surprise to learn that the CIA should have been devoting its energies and its substantial resources to this question. It would have been far more remarkable had it not been.

Two aspects of the revelation were genuinely striking, however. The first was that the issue was exposed in public at all. After all, the point about covert action is that it should be covert. So the interesting point here is that someone leaked what the CIA is doing. Leaks always have motives, and it is hard not to suspect that the motive for this leak was to try to stop the CIA operation in its tracks. That points to the White House.

The second striking point comes with a reading of the CIA's plans. These suggest a plausible reason why the leaker may have decided to put them in the public domain. For the agency's plans are distinguished not by their devilishness, or even by their absurdity, but by their banality.

The CIA's scheme is to enlist the help of Kurdish agents in northern Iraq and Shia agents in the south to destroy or disable something described as "key Iraqi pillars of economic and political power". Against the backdrop of a beefed-up propaganda war against Saddam, these agents are expected to create such mayhem and disorder that Iraqis in general and the coterie around Saddam in particular will be spurred to overthrow their ruler.

We are told that these are "still in the draft stage". Let us hope so. Perhaps they have also lost something in the leaking. For they add up to a rehash of exactly what the CIA has always sought to do in Iraq since Saddam ceased to be the West's ally and lost his status as its great hope against Iran.

These plans are a combination of wildly wishful thinking and a very intense cunning. It is noteworthy that they do not include schemes for an assassination attempt against the Iraqi president, but that they do not cannot simply be attributed to the fact that such plots have been unlawful in the US for two decades.

The reality is that while the rhetoric of some US politicians, many commentators and public opinion suggests that America would welcome a successful potshot at Saddam, Washington is extremely cautious about such a move. The administration would like a new Iraqi government, of course. But it does not want to get rid of Saddam only to see him replaced by a more radical Arab nationalist regime or by the collapse of Iraqi state power.

International public enemy number one he may seem to be, but Saddam is still seen by some American policy makers as a useful unifier of Iraq. These people do not want to see Iraq split into smaller and potentially destabilising statelets, least of all if they are vying for control of Saddam's chemical and biological weapons. In any case, their real fear is not Iraqi weapons of mass destruction but Iranian ones.

That is why George Bush and his most trusted CIA director, Robert Gates, always hoped that a sufficiently powerful assault on Iraq would lead to the overthrow of Saddam by the Iraqi military rather than by the Gulf war coalition. As we know, it did not happen in 1991. Yet this is still the preferred policy among some Washington strategists, and the CIA schemes that were leaked last week suggest that it is the strategy of choice in Langley too.

It is all very seductive — but also very foolish. As whoever leaked the CIA plans realises, these schemes are largely fantasy. If the Iraqi military would not turn against Saddam when the Iraqi state was rocking on its heels under the impact of Operation Desert Storm, it is hardly likely that it will do so if one of the warring bands of Kurds or Shias manages to set off a car bomb in Baghdad every now and again.

It was deeply ironic that the CIA's covert action plan was leaked last week, since the revelation coincided with the publication of the long internal inquiry into its most celebrated and spectacular post-war failure, the abortive Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1961, reported in last week's issue. The lesson of the Bay of Pigs was that the overthrow of Fidel Castro was much harder to accomplish — even in an era in which assassination was authorised at the highest level — than the agency's enthusiasts and exile groups persuaded themselves to be the case.

Castro and Saddam may be different rulers in all sorts of ways, but both have proved themselves to be far more resilient than the CIA has hoped. In the case of Iraq in particular, the problem is compounded by the fact that the economic and diplomatic blockade of Saddam means that there is hardly any Western network inside Iraq within which a covert operation can be concealed. The only one which might serve that purpose, of course, was the Unscom weapons inspection network, which is the focus of the latest confrontations.

Covert actions may have their place, but they need to be an extension of policy, not a substitute for it. If the leaks about the CIA's plans to overthrow Saddam are reliable, then they have become a substitute for the coalition-building, and for the coherent regional strategy that has been lacking from Washington.

Serious side of samba at the carnival parade

BRAZIL DIARY
John Ryle

IT'S ASH WEDNESDAY in Rio de Janeiro. I'm watching TV in the kitchen with Peter and Zé Motta, juggling between Globo and Manchete, the two main television stations in Brazil. We're waiting to hear the judges' verdict on our samba school, the União da Ilha — hoping to see ourselves on screen, *in flagrante* at the carnival parade. But there are 45 judges, and 40-odd schools. And each school has two or three thousand members. So it all takes time.

On the third night of the festival carnivalesque delirium is tempered, for members of the samba schools, by feverish rehearsals and last-minute preparations. Out of cavernous old warehouses in the docks roll the floats, the *carros alegóricos*. Walls are knocked down to accommodate them. In the streets and on the metro blissed-out *sambistas* pass by, feathered headgear beneath their arms, on their way to the assembly area outside the *sambódromo*, the parade ground built in the 1980s to contain the chaos of the street carnival.

Some samba schools celebrate individuals — this year's favourite is the musician Chico Buarque. Others address subjects of public concern, like the growth of crime. Hands Up, Tap Your Feet, It's A Stick-Up is the title of one: a full-scale model of a locomotive parades through the *sambódromo*; in front of a skulking figure with a bag of money represents the train-robber Ronnie Biggs, Brazil's most notorious expatriate resident. Brazilians have a soft spot for villains. And most of the samba schools are financed by the profits of the illicit drug trade, so the message is both secular and ambiguous.

Of the schools in the Special Group — Samba's First Division — ours is the last to parade. It is four in the morning before we enter the *sambódromo*, a concrete canyon half-a-mile long, filled with light and the thunder of drums. The stands are full of carnival-goers waving flags and dancing; the judges lurk in boxes. The cameras are all turned on us: on the extravagant invention of the floats, the rhythmic perfection of the drums, the choreographic discipline of the dancers.

The sambadrome is where the fate of each school is decided. Every *sambista* must believe they have won, even before it begins. Peter Motta, a carnival *aficionado*, has been out already with another school, Imperatriz. The theme Imperatriz has chosen this year is the Third Millennium: Motta is a robot. His electric-blue body stocking, yard-long antennae and luminescent yellow helmet are stacked in the bathroom.

For União da Ilha, for those in our wing, the costumes are all white: white shoes, white socks, white trousers and white shirts. The shirts bear an ethereal image of the face, sunken and lined, of a Frenchman named Pierre Verger, who died two years ago. Ilha's theme is homage to Verger, a wandering photographer and ethnologist who spent his last 40 years in Salvador da Bahia, in the northeast of the country, recording and practising the rituals of *candomblé*, the Afro-Brazilian religion practised there. Ilha's homage to Verger is the reason we are in their parade. I stayed in Verger's house for some months in the 1980s. He was already old; the roof of the house leaked; he cooked on a single gas ring; his priceless collection of negatives was stored perilously in cardboard boxes.

He was constantly visited by scholars and enthusiasts, eager to receive his blessing. My role as his house guest was partly to keep them at bay. Though not indifferent to celebrity, his ascetic living habits had distanced him from the world outside Bahia. To be the subject of a carnival parade would have filled him with horror and amusement.



Thousands of samba dancers took to the streets last month to celebrate Rio de Janeiro's four-day carnival PHOTO: RENZO GOSTOLI

Candomblé is sacred and carnival is profane; both have origins in Afro-Brazilian culture. Putting the two together is like mixing rap and gospel music. People do it, but not everyone approves. We were wary, yet União da Ilha's homage to Verger was, by carnival standards, in remarkably good taste. True, there were half-naked dancers standing on his head, a 20-foot-high statue that dominated the floats. But the samba written for the occasion was a powerful and erudite evocation of the presence of Africa in the new world, of the endurance of culture that Verger documented so assiduously in words and pictures. The final float, a blaze of silver, with Verger in old age, inside a giant flashbulb, about to confront the father of the gods, was moving beyond reason.

Too erudite. Perhaps that's why we didn't win. Of course it doesn't matter, though the routine accusations of backstage jiggery-pokery comforted us all. Carnival is a very serious business, but now it is Lent and it is over. Several days later I was still under the weather, but Motta appeared, dressed immaculately in a suit and tie, on his way to work. I must have looked surprised. "Do you think I spend the whole year being a *sambista*?" he said, "People have to work, you know, even in Brazil."

Cardinal 'guilty of gay abuse'

Kate Connolly in Vienna

IN AN unprecedented move, Austria's top bishops released a statement last week saying they believed the long-standing allegations of homosexuality against Vienna's former archbishop, Hans Hermann Gröer, were "essentially correct".

The affair concerning the 78-year-old cardinal has rocked the solidly Catholic state for almost three years. A "holy mission" from the Vatican was expected to arrive this week to investigate.

In 1995 Cardinal Gröer was forced to give up his archbishopric when he was accused of having abused a student more than 20 years earlier. No formal investigation took place, and many Catholics left the Church in protest.

When fresh allegations surfaced this year Cardinal Gröer went into hiding.

In their 360-word open letter to Austrian Catholics, the bishops said that even if Cardinal Gröer maintained his silence, "we cannot remain silent ourselves if we want to do justice to our duty towards the Church".

The statement was signed by the entire Austrian Catholic hierarchy, headed by Cardinal Christoph Schönborn, the archbishop of Vienna. In a surprisingly forthright tone the bishops added: "We have come to the moral certainty that the accusations levelled at former archbishop Cardinal Hans Hermann Gröer are essentially accurate."

The bishops recognise the need to heal a rift that has prompted priests and bishops to threaten to resign. The Pope is due to visit the country in June.

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Royal splits in the Lucky Country

Martin Walker reports from Sydney on Australia's constitutional debate

THIS has been a baffling time for a British observer to visit Australia. On the one hand, the outcome of last month's Constitutional Convention (sensibly abbreviated to Con-Con) suggests that there is now a growing majority of Australians who want to move towards a republic, severing the last constitutional ties with Britain, whose monarch is head of state.

On the other hand, there was an even larger majority of public support for the decision of the prime minister, John Howard, to send Australian SAS troops to join the British, American, Canadian and New Zealand forces in the Gulf.

No wonder the French grumble about Anglo-Saxon conspiracies. Saddam Hussein must have felt besieged by the ghosts of the old British Empire, who got the Middle East into this mess in the first place by inventing countries like Iraq, Palestine, Jordan and Kuwait when it toppled the Ottoman Empire in 1918. The happy outcome of Kofi Annan's diplomacy in Baghdad means this gathering of the Anglo-Saxon clans probably won't have to see action. But the enthusiasm with which Australia rallied to the flag also suggests that the republican phenomenon is far more complex than it might seem.

Australia's problem is that it is hard to graft a president, or any kind of new head of state, on to a Westminster-style parliamentary system. The Con-Con came up with a proposal that a new head of state should not be elected by the public, but should be chosen from the ranks of Australia's great and good by its political leaders, and then endorsed by two-thirds of parliament.

They suggested this in order to avoid the prospect of the election of a new president. An elected head of state would have a popular mandate, and thus a political legitimacy of his or her own. A president might on occasion feel empowered to refuse to sign a controversial act of parliament into law. This would thrust Australia back into those constitutional battles between crown and parliament that Britain took centuries to resolve.

It gets worse. Australia has not gone through the duel between the lower and upper houses of parliament that dominated British politics in the years before 1914, when the House of Lords was finally tamed. The Australian Senate still has the power to block a supply bill, which means that it can impose constitutional deadlock by refusing to vote the funds needed to keep government running. To impose upon this system a new head of state with anything more than ceremonial powers would set the stage for destabilising political drama in the future.

Under its current system, the Australian head of state has reserve powers similar to the Queen's: to be commander-in-chief of the armed forces; to invite someone with a chance of mobilising a parliamentary majority to become prime minister; and to prorogue parliament and force an election. These are not powers that Australia's parliament and politicians would happily grant to someone new, least of all if he enjoys the legitimacy of popular election.

Hence the politicians want to appoint, rather than elect, the head of state. The democratically minded Australian public also think by pretty strong margins that they should have the right to vote for their president. Otherwise they do not quite see the point. Indeed, recent polls suggested that about one in five of those who want a republic would vote No in a referendum unless they also had the right to elect the head of state.

Bear in mind that most referendums in Australia fail. To pass, they need not only a majority of the public, but also a majority of the individual states. Australia could be heading for that worst of all worlds, a referendum to end the monarchy which stumbles at one of these constitutional fences.

That referendum would also be about the psychological leap of severing formal ties with Britain. By an ironic twist of timing, Australia's Bureau of Statistics has just produced an analysis of the census which suggests that, in demographic terms, those links are still surprisingly strong.

According to conventional wisdom, mass immigration from Greece and Italy in the post-war period diluted the largely British stock. More recent immigration from Asia has added some spice to the melting pot.

But conventional wisdom is flawed. The census report found that though, in 1947, 90 per cent of the population was Australian-born, with 8 per cent born in Britain and New Zealand, this proportion of British stock is rising. In 1997, 77 per cent of the population were Australian-born, but those born in Britain and New Zealand had inched up to 9 per cent (of a very much larger population).

MOREOVER the numbers of Italian-born Australians (256,000) were shrinking significantly, as retirees went home to Italy to enjoy their generous Aussie pensions. The Dutch and Polish-born populations were also declining, and the Greeks (141,000) were static. Nor are the Asian immigrants yet having a dramatic impact on the population. A mere 130,000 Chinese-born, in an Australian population of close to 19 million, is a trickle rather than a flood. The result is an enduring dominance of British stock in the Australian mix.

Another intriguing aspect to the republic debate is that the strongest support for a republic came from those aged 35-55. The British connection may explain the fact that older people were some 10-15 per cent less eager to drop the Queen. But how to explain the finding that younger Australians were less pro-republic than the middle-aged?

One clue may be found in Mark Davis's Gangland, one of the most talked-about books of recent months, which is a generational *cri de coeur* in the guise of literary-cultural criticism. Davis writes of the cultural hegemony of what he calls "Leavisite liberals", by which I think he means the baby-boomers. In Australian terms, these are not just the children of the sixties, but also the "It's time" generation that was inspired by Gough Whitlam and the coming of a Labor government in 1972 after a prolonged Liberal ascendancy.

Another clue is that these baby-boomers, while opening Australia to its Asian-Pacific geographical identity and to a delightfully liberal social scene, have been less than triumphant in political terms. The latest issue of the revamped AQ (formerly Australia Quarterly) published the interim findings of Michael Pusey's "Middle Australia Project", which polled middle-income Australians.

He found that these classic beneficiaries of the Lucky Country were discontented. More than half of them think that the quality of life is falling, and almost two-thirds say that the income and job prospects of Middle Australia are declining. Less than 10 per cent were angry about this, but 55 per cent were "a bit unhappy". Asked who they blamed, almost none said immigrants. Their main complaints were politicians, big business, the media and education systems.

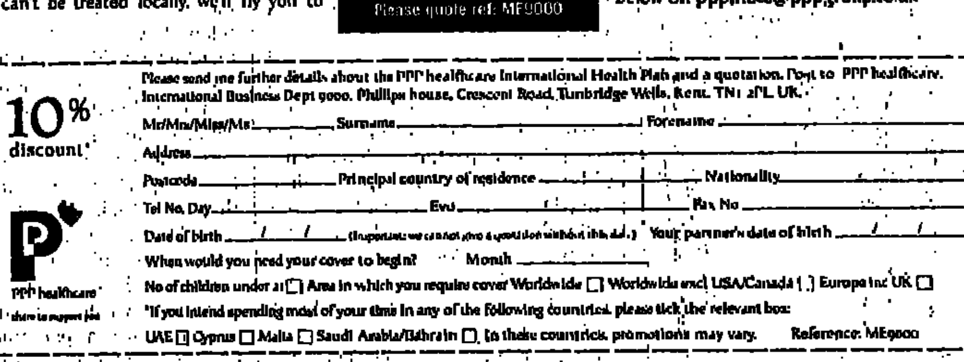
And now it is the politicians who seek to run the republic state, by appointing the president themselves. In their current mood, the voters seem little inclined to let the politicians have their way. Perhaps the election, expected this year, will change the politicians. Perhaps the Sydney Olympics in 2000 will change the mood.

More likely, I fear, is that the Asian financial crisis will deepen the discontent of an Australia in which 12 per cent of gross domestic product depends on trade with Asia.



Sydney's Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras parade last weekend included men dressed as the Chinese swimming team PHOTO: TORSTEN BLACKWOOD





A computer graphic showing the Body Zone inside the Millennium Dome COURTESY: HAYES DAVIDSON

The Week in Britain James Lewis

Child care hopes rise – and then fall

WITH a Budget due on March 17, a degree of speculation and wishful thinking is inevitable at this time of year. But reports that the Government is prepared to spend billions of pounds to subsidise the child-care costs of low-income families had more the ring of a leak than gossip.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, was said to be ready to pay £75 towards child-care costs of up to £100 a week incurred by families earning less than £20,000 a year. A larger sum would go to families with two or more children. Child-care campaigners could scarcely believe what was being suggested, particularly the scale of such a massive redistribution of wealth in favour of the poor.

But in no time at all, the Chancellor was delivering one of his stern lectures about financial prudence and warning against any return to "soft options" in public spending. By dampening down hopes of any dramatically improved poverty spending in his Budget, he was seen to be delivering a rebuff to the beleaguered Social Security Secretary, Harriet Harman, to whom the leak was (probably wrongly) attributed.

Ms Harman became deeply unpopular among women and some Labour backbenchers in November, when she announced cuts in benefits to lone parents. There was, she then said, no choice: the Chancellor had promised to adhere rigidly to Tory-set spending limits during Labour's first two years in office, and that meant cuts.

The truth seems to be that the Government may indeed be prepared to spend more on child care, but not just yet. The Treasury is awash with revenue, thanks to the flourishing economy, and should be extremely flush by May 1999, by which time Mr Brown will have honoured his pre-election spending pledges. This will be the moment when he is free to loosen his purse strings. Even so, up to £10 billion on child care still seems a lot of money.



THOSE Commonwealth countries of which the Queen is head of state are to be asked whether they favour new legislation to give royal daughters equal rights to succeed to the throne. British ministers plan to end the 800-year-old tradition of men taking precedence over women within the royal family.

The Queen is said to have no objection to the proposed legislation, and there is little public opposition to changing rules which only made practical sense in feudal times, when monarchs might lead their troops into battle. The new rules will have no immediate impact on the royal family and would only come into play if, for example, the first-born child of Prince William, second in line to the throne, turned out to be a girl.

The proposed bill is seen as another sign that the Government is looking to "modernise" the monarchy as part of its wider package of constitutional reform, which will also involve the unelected House of Lords.

A BURST of high-pressure salesmanship by the Prime Minister succeeded in sparking at least some public enthusiasm for the Millennium Dome at Greenwich — the £758 million project which has, until now, been regarded either as a bit of a joke or a bit of an embarrassment, mainly because no one knew what it would contain, or why.

Tony Blair revealed all. The centrepiece of the dome will be a huge, hollow human effigy — the Collossus of Greenwich — inside which visitors can roam through an interactive exhibition about the human body. Other zones will focus on spiritual reflection, dreamscapes, skills, play and learning, and environmental issues.

"This is our Dome, Britain's Dome . . . and it will be the envy of the world," gushed Mr Blair, mainly for the benefit of the companies to which he looks for sponsorship. "Greenwich is the place where the millennium begins," he continued. "I want every child in Britain to be part of the millennium experience; to take from it an experience so powerful that it gives them that abiding sense of purpose and unity that stays with them through the rest of their lives."

So the Dome will perhaps be the globe's biggest show in 2000. But worries persist that the project still lacks a Grand Idea — a strand that will pull all the exhibits together and give them a meaning that transcends such hyperbole as "the spirit of the future".

ORDINARY folk who enjoy perks such as the use of company cars and free accommodation have to pay income tax on what the Inland Revenue calls "benefits in kind". Clergymen are similarly taxed if they have work done on houses provided for them by their churches.

It was a disgruntled clergyman, the Rev John Ticehurst, of Wareham, Dorset, who asked why the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine, managed to escape tax on the £650,000 improvements to his official apartments. What, he asked, would the Inland Revenue make of the Blairs' new £100,000 kitchen at 10 Downing Street, or of the free flights enjoyed by the husbands and wives of other cabinet ministers?

Several tax lawyers and accountancy experts were of the opinion that Mr Blair and Lord Irvine "should consult an accountant as soon as possible". The Inland Revenue said that if refurbishment or decoration was for personal benefit, then there was a "potential charge", though it refused to comment on the liability of any individual.

Somali seaman 'was wrongly hanged'

Duncan Campbell

THE Court of Appeal made an unprecedented condemnation of capital punishment last week and expressed its "profound regret" to the family of Hussein Mattan, a Somali seaman who was wrongly hanged for murder in Cardiff 46 years ago.

Evidence which had emerged "at the 11th hour" cast further doubt on what was the first case to be referred back to the Court of Appeal by the Criminal Cases Review Commission. The case was described by Cardiff West Labour MP Rhodri Morgan as a "legalised lynching".

The decision was greeted with delight and applause by the family of the dead man. His widow, Laura, who is seriously ill, had fought for her husband from the moment he was arrested. Mr Mattan's son, Omar, aged 48, said: "My mother took me to see my father the day before he was executed. She was kept going by the fact that she always knew he was innocent."

Mr Mattan, aged 28, was convicted in 1952 of the murder of Lily Volpert, whose throat was cut in the Bute Town area of Cardiff. He was not granted an appeal and was hanged within six weeks.

John Griffith Williams QC, for the Crown, accepted that the two chief prosecution witnesses, Harold Cover and May Gray, could no longer be regarded as credible. Evidence that had become available at the 11th hour indicated that another Somali sailor, Tahir Gass, had been identified by Cover as being at the scene. The defence was not told. Gass was charged with another murder in 1952 in which the victim was stabbed. He was found guilty but insane and was deported to Somalia after serving a sentence in Broadmoor. He was known to be violent, with an obsession with knives.

Michael Mansfield QC, for Mr Mattan, said the fresh evidence had been uncovered last week by solicitors Bernard and Lynne de Maid and barrister Anne Shamash as they examined documents not disclosed to the defence in 1952. They had found a note which showed that a Detective Inspector Lloyd-Roberts had interviewed Cover who had identified Gass as the Somalian at the scene. It had emerged that Gass had had a gold tooth, Mr Mansfield said. Cover had originally told police that the man at the scene had a gold tooth.

Lord Justice Rose, sitting with Mr Justice Holland and Mr Justice Penry-Davey, said: "It is, of course, a matter for very profound regret that in 1952 Mr Mattan was convicted and hanged, and that it has taken 46 years for that conviction to be shown to be unsafe. The court can only hope that its decision today will provide some crumb of comfort for his surviving relatives."

He added that the case had a wider significance. It showed, he said, that "capital punishment was not perhaps a prudent culmination for a criminal justice system which is human and therefore fallible". It also demonstrated that criminal law and practice had changed for the better, that the Criminal Cases Review Commission was a "necessary and welcome" body without whose work the injustice might never have been identified.

The judge said that no one associated with the criminal justice system could afford to be complacent and that "injustices of this kind can only be avoided if all concerned observe the very highest standards of integrity, conscientiousness and professional skill."

Lynne de Maid said that compensation would now be sought for Mr Mattan.

Chile 'suicide' staged

Geoffrey Gibbs and Richard Norton-Taylor

A BRITISH journalist found hanged in a hotel room in Chile eight years ago was unlawfully killed, a resumed inquest in Exmouth in Devon concluded.

Tony Moyle, father of the journalist and former RAF helicopter pilot, fought a long campaign to overturn the claim by Chilean police that the death was suicide. Last week he paid tribute to the courage of Chilean investigating judges in helping secure the inquest verdict.

The body of Jonathan Moyle, aged 28, editor of the magazine Defence Helicopter World, was discovered partly naked in a wardrobe at the hotel in Santiago on March 31, 1990.

He was in the Chilean capital investigating a story that a Chilean firm, Industrias Cardoen, planned to convert American civilian helicopters into gunships for sale to Iraq (Kuwait was invaded the following year). He was also investigating reports that the helicopter would have a British-designed missile guidance system, and that Iraq wanted a Chilean version of a mine made by GEC-Marconi. Evidence that Cardoen was in fact supplying weapons emerged much later, during the Matrix Churchill arms-to-Iraq trial in London.

The journalist was found hanging by his shirt with a pillow case over his head. A needle mark on his leg suggested he had been sedated. Drugs were found in his stomach. A chambermaid told police she had seen blood on the bed. However, the Santiago police decided it had been suicide. Later, claims were put about that Mr Moyle died in a bizarre sex game that went wrong. The Foreign Office later apologised to the family for spreading this allegation.

A forthcoming book, The Valkyrie Operation, alleges that the killing was organised by Cardoen's head of public relations, Raul Montecinos, who warned Moyle off. Montecinos is said to have confessed to a friend before he died two years ago.

After reviewing evidence forwarded by the Chilean authorities, the East Devon coroner, Richard van Oppen, ruled that Moyle had been unlawfully killed by person or persons unknown.

In Brief

MOHAMED Al Fayed, the Harrods boss, was arrested and released on bail after agreeing to answer allegations of theft and criminal damage by his arch-rival Tiny Rowland.

LABOUR unveiled a plan to reward "super teachers" with salaries of up to £40,000 a year to provide an alternative career path for excellent classroom performers.

THE Government's announcement that prescription charges are to go up from £5.65 to £5.80 drew fire from Labour backbenchers.

THE Scottish Secretary, Donald Dewar, apologised to the actor Sean Connery for "speculation" that ministers had blocked a proposal to award him a knighthood.

DERMOT Morgan, the actor who plays Father Ted in the popular television sitcom, dropped dead of a suspected heart attack days before the latest series was due to begin. He was 45.

POLICE in Bedford shot dead a suspected armed burglar and then discovered that the victim, Michael James Fitzgerald, 32, had broken into his own flat when drunk. He brandished a replica handgun at police.

PARATROOPER Lee Clegg, convicted of the murder of Karen Reilly, a teenager shot dead while joyriding in Belfast in 1990, is to be given a new trial. Sinn Fein described the decision as "outrageous".

ARCHERS' Addicts, the fan-club to the radio soap, reported a flood of angry calls after the character John Archer was killed off in a tractor accident. Actor Sam Barriscale, aged 23, has decided his good looks are wasted on radio.

CATHAY Pacific says it will refuse to carry Oasis in future without a guarantee of "adult behaviour" after members of the pop group were almost thrown off a flight to Perth for abusing staff and fellow passengers.

THE Guardian was Newspaper of the Year for the second year running in Granada's What The Papers Say Awards. It was also awarded the London Press Club's prestigious Freedom of the Press Award for its investigation into Jonathan Aitken. The former Tory MP meanwhile has been hired as a Middle East arms salesman by GEC-Marconi.

THE Church of Wales has dropped its ban on remarrying divorced people in church. The decision will now lie with individual priests.

Government lost £105m on aid deal

David Hencke

THE Government lost more than £105 million in a "catastrophic" aid deal covering 21 Westland helicopters to India, which are now being returned to be cannibalised for spare parts for £900,000, a National Audit Office investigation has concluded.

The confidential report — sparked by the Guardian's disclosure of a loss of £65 million on the contract last year — has confirmed ministers' views that they were right to abandon the aid and trade programme which helps British industry win subsidised contracts abroad.

It will give added clout to the determination of Clare Short, the International Development Secretary, to refuse to fund aid deals just to help out British industry. Her officials have described the original Westland deal as "a catastrophic waste of money".

MPs on the Commons public accounts committee were to discuss the report on Wednesday. Copies have also been sent to Whitehall departments, Westland, Rolls Royce and AES Aerospace for their views.

The report by Sir John Bourn, the Controller and Auditor General, blames the then trade secretary, Lord Tebbit, and Lady Thatcher, for overruling civil servants to fund the Westland deal. Sir John said: "The contract had become crucial to Westland's continued existence as the United Kingdom's sole indigenous source of helicopter design, development and manufacture."

The helicopters delivered in 1986 were in service for less than two years when two crashed, killing 10 people. Pilots refused to fly them because passengers said they were unsafe. They have been in aircraft hangars for nine years, none having being used for more than 6 per cent of their certified life.

The report says: "There was a high rate of engine failure; engine flame-outs; split torque; a high rate of oil consumption; accelerated wear on the tail rotor cable; and a high incidence of foreign object damage." It adds they were poorly maintained and staff were not properly trained to service them.

The report discloses that the Department of Trade and Industry had already given Westland £41 million to develop the helicopter — called the W30 — with promises of potential sales of 425 helicopters worth £1.1 billion. In fact, apart from one other order, the 21 helicopters sent to India at a cost of £65 million from the aid budget were the sole sale.

Diana leaves sons £13m

Luke Harding

THE will of Diana, Princess of Wales, reveals the depth of her enmity for Prince Charles and makes clear that she did not want him to be solely responsible for the upbringing of their children.

Princes William and Harry are to inherit a fortune of almost £13 million from their mother's estate.

The will, originally drawn up in June 1993, while relations were at their most acrimonious, stipulates that Charles should "consult with my mother" — Frances Shand Kydd — over the "upbringing, education and welfare" of the princes.

The reference reflects the princess's growing disenchantment with the royal family before her divorce, and her fear that her sons might be crushed by royal protocol.

Diana's will, published on Monday, revealed that she left an estate of £21,711,485. More than £8.5 million was paid in tax, leaving a net fortune of almost £13 million. The bulk of the money is to be held in trust for the princes until they are 25. The princess also gave £50,000 to her butler, Paul Burrell.

● Princess Margaret had to cut short her holiday on the Caribbean island of Mustique last week after suffering a mild stroke.



JACK CUNNINGHAM, the agriculture minister, faces a challenge from MPs to explain his move to new offices at a cost of £2.3 million.

The Commons agriculture select committee may recall the minister over the cost of the move.

Mr Cunningham now has a walnut-panelled office and an ersatz antique desk (above). Richard Packer, the permanent secretary, has a room with an art deco stained glass dome in the ceiling (left) that has also been renovated at great expense.

Libya hails Lockerbie case ruling

Ian Black

BRITAIN and the United States suffered a setback over the Lockerbie bombing last week when the World Court in The Hague ruled that it had the right to decide where two Libyan suspects should be tried.

In a decision that was hailed as a victory by British relatives of the 270 people who died, the court — formally called the International Court of Justice — said it did have jurisdiction to hear Libya's complaint against both governments.

Colonel Gadafy's regime contends that the Montreal Convention on civil aviation gives it the right to try the suspects — who it insists are innocent. London and Washington want the men — said to be Libyan intelligence officers — tried in Scotland or the US, and have resisted demands that the case be heard in a neutral venue.

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, called the decision "neither a victory nor a defeat". But Britain clearly would have preferred the court to throw out the Libyan application. The Foreign Office said it would be "speculative" to comment further.

Libya hailed the ruling. But the decision does not in itself settle the judicial deadlock over a trial venue. US diplomats said they were disappointed but not surprised.

Jim Swire, chairman of UK Families Flight 103, who lost his daughter in the disaster on December 21, 1988, was elated. "To hear a learned court of this sort look at something so objectively and independently of the relative power of the two sides represented is really very refreshing," he said.

But American relatives disagreed: "It's a terrible ruling and in the end it's not going to amount to anything," said Dan Cohen of New Jersey, whose daughter died in the bombing. "It hands the Libyans an enormous propaganda victory. They can say 'we're the good guys, the Americans are the bullies'.

"The bombing was an attack on America and it should have been handled by the United States unilaterally," Mr Cohen added. "Now we're in what is going to be an endless morass, which puts any hope of justice farther away than ever."

Despite hopes for progress as the 10th anniversary of the incident approaches, little movement is in sight.

Hague pledges to fight Labour PR 'vandalism'

Michael White

WILLIAM HAGUE last week warned Tony Blair that the Tories would fight "every inch of the way" to resist the creeping imposition of proportional representation (PR) for Westminster elections because it would undermine the fundamental principle of democratic accountability.

He also demanded a clear set of "basic ground rules" to govern the increasing use of referendums in Britain so that the questions are fair to both sides of the arguments — a swipe at the elected mayor for London vote on May 7. Mr Hague warned that the process would succumb to "accusations of political manipulation and abuse", in his speech on "Change and Tradition: Thinking Creatively about the Constitution" to the Centre for Policy Studies in London.

In a speech which confirmed that the new Conservative leader will reluctantly accept most of Labour's package of constitutional changes, Mr Hague admitted that 18 years spent defending the status quo had left his party using abstract language few people understood. "We found it impossible to engage the interest of the British people . . . we are now paying the political price for that neglect," he conceded, even as he condemned what he called the ill-conceived "constitutional vandalism" of the Blair reforms — "of much less concern to most people than the physical vandalism they see at their local bus shelter".

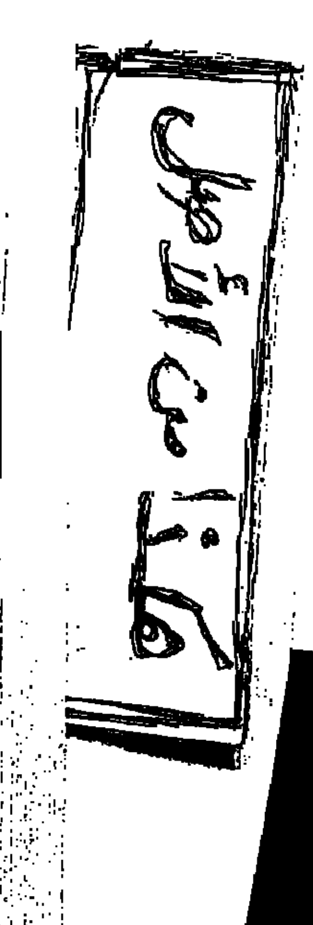
But even as he accepted that the next Conservative government will inherit a much-changed constitution, he pledged his revamped team to construct policies and principles which would allow them to "correct the dangerous imbalances and tensions which Labour's constitutional reforms will unleash".

He singled out the new Human Rights Bill as likely to give judges even greater powers of judicial review at Parliament's expense. Having Congressional-style confirmation hearings for MPs to vet senior judicial appointments might redress the balance, he said.

As for devolution, it would set London and Edinburgh blaming each other whenever a hospital or school failed. Tories would fight every seat, but they might soon be urging reform at Westminster — including the possibilities of preventing Scottish MPs voting on English matters, sharply reducing their numbers, or setting up an English parliament, he said.

In a speech marked more by unresolved policy options — the Tories plan to make up their mind closer to the next election — Mr Hague said the fourth option might be to devolve decisions over health and education to hospital trusts and schools. "All four solutions have drawbacks," he admitted.

Hague strategists have identified four key principles: limited government which protects individuals against an overmighty state; the rule of law; the continuing unity of the United Kingdom; and — most important — democratic accountability.



VSO fights shortage of recruits

Owen Bowcott

VOLUNTARY Service Overseas, the charity which has sent workers to the developing world for the past 40 years, is suffering a severe recruitment crisis and last week blamed the "Cool Britannia" boom.

Britons in the "feel great" society have become "more selfish and less caring" about less privileged parts of the globe, the organisation claimed.

In the past two years, applications have slumped by more than 20 per cent. Teachers and engineers are down by half.

Launching its report, entitled Where's Everybody Gone?, the broadcaster and author Jonathan Dimbleby, who is on the VSO board, said: "People appear to be less concerned about the rest of the world than they used to be.

"Big City bonuses are back again. When there's a time of growth, the demand for skills and talent affects our ability to attract people."

But the shortfall may be more than a reflection of the latest economic upturn, VSO fears. "For all Tony Blair's talk of a 'caring, sharing society' and post-Diana compassion, there are many signs that people have become more selfish and less caring," the report says. Higher graduate salaries may also be tempting more college-leavers to stay on a career ladder once they have landed a job. The average wage for a new graduate is now £15,500.

Education is also blamed. Government rhetoric has not been matched by lessons in the classroom. An opinion poll for VSO earlier this year found that 55 per cent of 12- to 16-years-olds would like to help people in the developing world but "daily life makes them forget".

Decreased coverage of development affairs, particularly on television, has reduced awareness of the problems in the Third World.

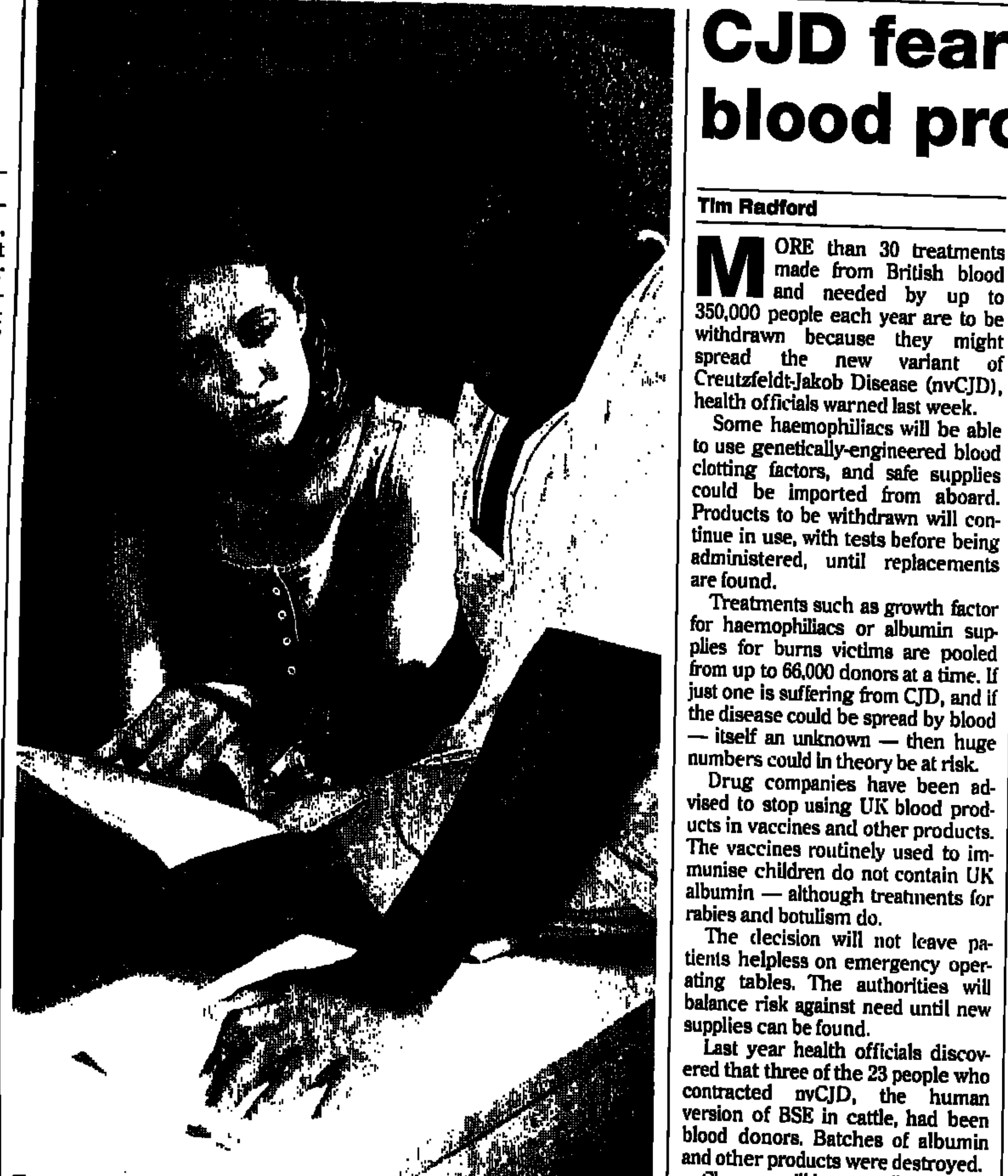
"Britain is becoming more insular. There has been nothing in the 1990s like the breakthrough of Live Aid in the 1980s," the report quotes Paddy Coulter, of the International Broadcasting Trust.

Most foreign programmes are about wildlife. "The main factual programmes have lost their global perspective and the new documentary soaps are all about Brits."

But the charity recognises that nine out of 10 people aged between 15 and 25 have never heard of VSO; that many who have believe the charity still sends school leavers abroad; and that volunteers worry whether their experience will enhance their job prospects when they return.

The charity received 1,400 fewer applications for this year, and will have 200 fewer volunteers overseas compared with last year, around 1,750. Their average age is 34. Past volunteers include many well-known public figures. Six present MPs have worked for the charity: the former Tory minister Alistair Goodlad, the Liberal Democrat David Rendell, and four Labour members — Jeremy Corbyn, Mike Gapes, Judith Church and Hilary Armstrong.

To make VSO more attractive to future volunteers it plans to subsidise Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) courses; offer shorter placements than the normal two-year contracts; promote VSO experience as career enhancement to employers; and negotiate leave of absence with NHS trusts.



Teaching aid . . . people offering teaching skills are down by half

'Rubberneck' tourists to get a peep at Titanic

John Ezard

FOR a titanic price, the ultimate package tour peep-show will be launched — a two-mile, £19,500-per-head voyage to the bottom of the sea to view the wreck of the liner Titanic.

"Yes, it's a fair amount but it's only the price of a decent car or a quality berth on a cruise," Kevin Abbey, managing director of Bakers Dolphin Travel, the group offering the trip, said last week.

Millvina Dean, aged 86, now Britain's only living Titanic survivor, commented: "They must be mad. Everyone's trying to cash in."

A group subsidiary, Bristol-based Wildwings, will take about 100 tourists down to circle the wreck in August and September. Some 300 miles off the Newfoundland coast, they will descend in two of the Finnish-built submarines used in the Hollywood film.

The trips, to be announced at a travel show in London, got a fillip yesterday from news that the film has so far grossed £575 million worldwide, overtaking Jurassic Park.

However, tourists will not get close enough to the 86-year-old wreck to see whether the film's romantic ending has come true. This shows the 1,500 lost passengers living inside the hull and applauding as Kate Winslet and Leonardo DiCaprio kiss.

John Brodie-Good, managing director of Wildwings, said: "The subs will spend two to three hours around the wreck. The purpose is to see, photograph and video the ship. There will be no contact. We will respect it as a grave."

Any attempt to enter the Titanic's hull would bring swift legal action from the US company, RMS Titanic Inc, which owns the salvage rights and mounted the worldwide exhibition of artefacts.

Despite protests from the dwindling band of survivors, efforts to treat the wreck as a sacrosanct graveyard have collapsed since the ocean explorer Robert Ballard discovered it in the 1980s.

Camerawork inside the hull, featured in James Cameron's blockbuster movie, is only one of numerous intrusions.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
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CJD fears force blood product ban

Tim Radford

MORE than 30 treatments made from British blood and needed by up to 350,000 people each year are to be withdrawn because they might spread the new variant of Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (nvCJD), health officials warned last week.

Some haemophiliacs will be able to use genetically-engineered blood clotting factors, and safe supplies could be imported from aboard. Products to be withdrawn will continue in use, with tests before being administered, until replacements are found.

Treatments such as growth factor for haemophiliacs or albumin supplies for burns victims are pooled from up to 66,000 donors at a time. If just one is suffering from CJD, and if the disease could be spread by blood — itself an unknown — then huge numbers could in theory be at risk.

Drug companies have been advised to stop using UK blood products in vaccines and other products. The vaccines routinely used to immunise children do not contain UK albumin — although treatments for rabies and botulism do.

The decision will not leave patients helpless on emergency operating tables. The authorities will balance risk against need until new supplies can be found.

Last year health officials discovered that three of the 23 people who contracted nvCJD, the human version of BSE in cattle, had been blood donors. Batches of albumin and other products were destroyed.

Changes will be sporadic and take months: the Committee on the Safety of Medicines will examine alternative supplies and balance the long-term risk to patients against urgent needs.

The Health Secretary, Frank Dobson, said: "These measures... are precautionary. They do not mean that UK blood and blood products are unsafe. We have no evidence to show that nvCJD can be transmitted via blood products or blood — the risk remains only hypothetical. But we must proceed on the principle that it is better to be safe than sorry."

Blood is a mix of a liquid known as plasma and red and white blood cells. The blood products are refined from the plasma. These fall into three groups, clotting factors needed by haemophiliacs, albumin used for the treatment of shock and burns, and immunoglobulins used in the treatment of blood diseases. Donated blood can spread diseases — HIV and hepatitis are notorious examples — but there is no test for anyone who might be incubating CJD and no way of recognising the agent in donated blood.

Sarah Boseley adds: A medical has study suggested that there may be a link between the measles, mumps and rubella vaccine (MMR) given to children in their second year of life and inflammatory bowel disease and autism.

Dr Andrew Wakefield and colleagues at the Royal Free Hospital, London, report in the Lancet that children referred to them with signs of autism and gut problems had a hitherto unknown bowel syndrome and that treating it alleviated some autism symptoms.

They also found that behavioural changes in the children typical of autism, such as forgetting the basic language they had just learned, began within days of their MMR vaccination.

Health officials continue to recommend the vaccination for babies.

Ambitious Irish scale jobs heights in Britain

THE Irish in Britain are better qualified, more ambitious and higher up the corporate ladder than their British counterparts, *writes Owen Bowcott.*

Overturning centuries of crude racial stereotyping — portraying them as gormless navvies or terrorist suspects — a new survey of the 800,000 or so Irish-born people living in Britain reflects a dramatic shift in immigration patterns and the success of the Irish economy.

Irish eyes certainly should be smiling, according to the study. One in six Irish men in Britain is earning more than £30,000, compared with one in nine Britons. Even considering the figures for both men and women, the Irish are better paid.

"Forty years ago, Irish people came over with muscle and brawn to offer," said Douglas Baxter, chief executive of the Irish Post newspaper, which commissioned the survey.

"Now the pattern has changed, with skilled, well-educated Irish people coming and securing high-profile positions in British companies. As these people rise up the corporate ladder, the Irish influence in British businesses is growing."

The study, for which more than 6,000 people — born in the south or north of Ireland — were interviewed, was carried out by the market research company BMRB.

Among prominent Irish figures who have risen to the top are Gerry Robinson, recently appointed chairman of the Arts Council, Brendan O'Neill, shortly to join ICI as chief executive officer, and Terry Leahy, chief executive of Tesco.

"The Irish community is no longer centred on communities like Kilburn in London or Digbeth in Birmingham," Mr Baxter said. "People feel far less discriminated against and far more integrated into the community. Their ghettoisation is over."

The improvement in Irish incomes has been rapid. Over the past five years the number earning more than £20,000 has increased by 50 per cent.

One in six Irish people in Britain has a degree; among women the figure is one in seven, compared with one in 10 British women. The Irish were also found to be more ambitious than their British counterparts.

Despite the academic advantages, many Irish people still believe their heritage will be a drawback. A quarter of those in the 15-24 age group see their national background as a handicap at work.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
March 8 1998

The day London turned into a shire

Matthew Engel joins the countryside protest march in the capital

ON A brisk Sunday morning in early spring, the British love the idea of a stroll in the sunshine, away from the traffic fumes. Normally, Londoners head for the countryside to do just that.

Last weekend the flow went into reverse. The country came to town. Its representatives walked gently and genially from the Embankment to Hyde Park, no great distance. Some of the marchers have estates bigger than that.

At the end they might have wondered why on earth they bothered, since there was nothing there save a huge banner saying "Finish", as if this were the London Marathon, and two rows of Portaloos. (Relief for the countryside!) It was curiously anti-climactic. There was nothing to do except have a hot dog and a drink and head back home.

One suspects, though, that everyone who took part in this marathon will finish as a winner. The Countryside March was a phenomenally successful piece of politics. The extent of it became clear only if you went back to the start and realised that people were still arriving four hours after the first walkers set off.

Labour strategists watching Sunday night's news cannot have failed to get the message. Opinion polls showing a majority in favour of banning fox hunting are meaningless in the face of a minority this large, this committed.

For years the hunters have been the hunted, politically. But their clever campaign has enabled them to draw away from the jaws of baying MPs. Master of Foxhounds Blair must now be desperate to find ways of calling the dogs off.

The Prime Minister claimed the march had been hijacked by the pro-blood sports lobby. The truth is actually the reverse. This was a pro-hunting demo that had its message diffused and softened by all kinds of extraneous material about the threat to rural life. Everyone in Britain is in favour of the countryside, just as all Americans are for Mom and apple pie.

The difficult bit is deciding whose countryside it is, and what it's for. That's why there were no speeches in Hyde Park. As soon as anyone said anything, the disagreements would start. It might have become obvious that many of the agri-businessmen who were on the streets last Sunday have done far more to grub up, poison and generally wreck Arcadia than any member of the Labour government.

As it was, they met almost no opposition. The streets of London were otherwise deserted; there was even a shortage of Japanese tourists to explain the Tube system to all the baffled incomers. Londoners might have been tempted to greet them with the traditional rural cry: "Oy, you! Get off my land!" But there were just a couple of dozen anti-hunt lobbyists who shouted rather pathetically as the multitude passed.

A shaven-headed youth near Piccadilly gave them V-signs. "We subsidise you," bellowed another as they paraded by the daffodils in the park. "Why don't you get proper jobs?" Funny thing is people used to shout just the same thing at leftwing protesters in the old days.

This, however, was a protest that glorified the traditional British caste system, indeed even embodied it. As the first coachloads assembled by the river, the great and the good were inside the Savoy Hotel having breakfast: a handful of Labour supporters, including the ministers Michael Meacher and Lord Donoughue who were presumably protesting against themselves, a good sprinkling of Lib Dems, including the leader, and pretty well every active Tory politician you have ever heard of.

These were all people who come here often enough to be on nodding terms with the doorman, but they were pretending they were out of town.

The peers were in heavy tweeds and clashing checks, as if it were market day. Gillian Shephard was in grubby cable-knit, as for weeding; Michael Heseltine had dressed to invade Iraq; Virginia Bottomley, bless her, had dressed for the Savoy.

They were all clearly intending to march on their stomachs, though it is quite possible that many did their TV interviews and photo-calls, then went home. No one could be sure: if they did walk, the politicians were expected to stay away from the forward echelons and mingle with the ordinary folk with their confusing mix of banners: "Scottish Terrier Men Say No Way"; "For Fox Sake, Listen To Us"; "No To The Islington Jackboot"; "We Support Blair Coursing"; "The Fox Got Our Chickens. Now We're Going to Get Her"; "No to Open Access"; "Buy British Cheese".

And so on, and on. Banner after banner. Mile after mile. Thousands upon thousands. On the Serpentine Bridge I overheard two adjoining conversations. A tweedy lady was telling her friend: "This is meant to be a bloody democracy. But you can't do anything these days." Next to her was one of the antis, trying to explain his case: "This is a democratic country, and most people don't want fox hunting."

So what is democracy? It's a deep question for a Sunday stroll, but it is at the heart of the argument.

At what point does a majority's power end and a minority's right begin?

There were many, many subtexts to last Sunday's march. But one stood out: the perception that Britain's new governing party has a tendency to bossiness on matters of which it knows very little. And this feeling is not confined to fox hunters.



Demonstrators fill a London street in the biggest protest march since the 1980s PHOTO SAMANTHA PEARCE

Rural lobby gives Labour a nasty fright

Anne Perkins

THE Government was trying to broker a compromise on fox hunting this week after Sunday's Countryside March — the biggest protest since the CND marches of the early 1980s — which panicked ministers into a series of concessions to the rural lobby even before the more than 250,000 protesters reached London.

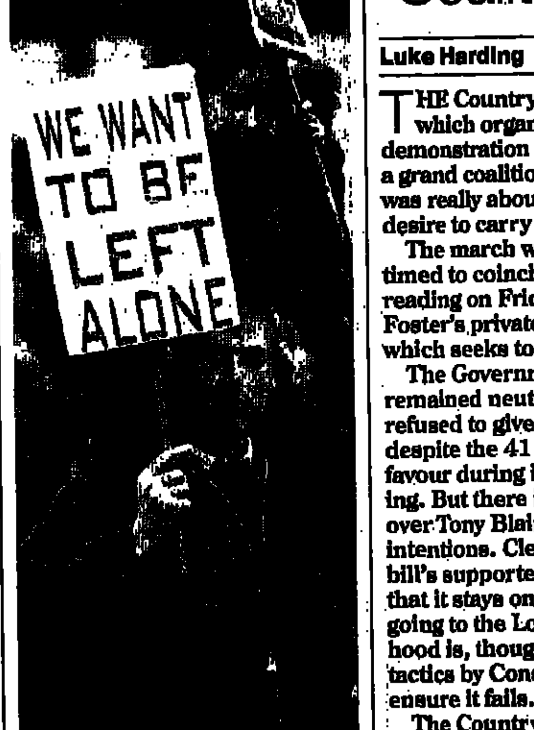
The compromise could involve drawing up a code of conduct and licensing hunts on condition they observe it. Practices such as digging out hunted foxes from their earths, temporarily filling in earths so hunted foxes cannot hide and ending some ways of hunting fox cubs could be outlawed.

But one minister against fox hunting indicated the perils contained in attempting to reach an accommodation when he said after the march: "There is no room for arbitration on this issue. You're either for hunting or against it."

Anti-hunting backbenchers are already furious that the Government is refusing to grant extra time to give the bill a chance of becoming law. Mr Meacher became the first minister to admit it would fall, when he told a Sunday television programme that the bill "won't get on the statute book".

Attempts to defuse the hunting row came at the end of a week of U-turns and concessions to the countryside lobby. The Government has backtracked on greenfield development, softened its position on the right to roam, extended consultation on banning unpasteurised milk, found new money for beef farmers, eased the financial pressure on village shops, promised to delay village school closures and held out the prospect of action on rural traffic.

Cabinet-level negotiations are also under way over transforming the Ministry of Agriculture into a Rural Affairs Department. Downing Street strongly denied this was a response to the march.



'Coalition' conceals fight against hunt ban

Luke Harding

THE Countryside Alliance which organised Sunday's demonstration describes itself as a grand coalition, but the march was really about one thing: the desire to carry on killing foxes.

The march was deliberately timed to coincide with the third reading on Friday of Mike Foster's private members' bill which seeks to ban foxhunting.

The Government has formally remained neutral on the bill and refused to give it extra time, despite the 411-151 vote in favour during its second reading. But there is still uncertainty over Tony Blair's longer-term intentions. Clever tactics by the bill's supporters may ensure that it stays on the agenda by going to the Lords. The likelihood is, though, that wrecking tactics by Conservative MPs will ensure it fails.

The Countryside Alliance openly describes itself as a pro-hunting body, and is a subsidiary of the British Field Sports Society. In a symbolic move, red-coated huntsmen were invited to walk at the front of the march. Faced with such a robust display of shire will, it is unlikely that Tony Blair will risk a head-on confrontation with the pro-hunting lobby later in this parliament. If this is the case, then the marchers have won the argument.

The alliance is also dissatisfied with the Government's handling of other rural issues:

- The right to roam. The alliance is worried about the threat of statutory action by the Government to give people the right to roam over private land. Landowners have been given three months to come up with a voluntary code. Farmers claim walkers will force them to introduce expensive insurance and may damage crops. Ramblers groups dismiss this as "absolute rubbish".
- Threats to the livestock industry from the effects of the BSE crisis, the strong pound and cheap imports. The National Farmers Union says thousands of livestock farmers still face enormous problems caused by the current beef ban.
- The green belt. The alliance welcomed last week's announcement by the Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott that 60 per cent of future development should be built on brownfield sites, but it wants the figure to be higher and claims countryside areas are still threatened by large housing developments.
- Rural infrastructure. The countryside is in danger of losing rural services such as transport, schools, hospitals and village shops, the alliance claims.
- The handgun ban, in the wake of the Dunblane massacre, is still deeply unpopular.
- Reform of the Common Agricultural Policy. Wanted by the alliance, which says all change must be regulated carefully.

Euro's coming, like it or not

EUROPE'S race to monetary union passed a fresh milestone last week when all the 11 declared runners satisfied the entry requirements. Ironically, the three countries that have decided to stay out — the UK, Sweden and Denmark — turned out to have undershot the Maastricht ceiling for budget deficits (3 per cent of GDP) by much wider margins than enthusiasts such as France, Germany and Italy. The UK's deficit is only 1.7 per cent. Germany and Italy — thanks to creative accounting and a late spurt of economic growth — came in at 2.7 per cent while France was spot on target at 3 per cent.

In a technical sense the eligible 11 have good reason to celebrate. They have driven their economies into the ground to fulfil their Maastricht vows in time for the nuptials. The cost has been a terrifying rise in unemployment. If they had suffered all this and still not qualified it would have been doubly tragic. As it is, they have met the criteria when there are signs that Europe's economy is emerging from the pre-Maastricht ice age. Germany and France, despite Asian turbulence, could grow by 3 per cent this year, something that hasn't happened this decade.

The bad news is that, even if they succeed, it is unlikely to reduce European Union unemployment, now at 19 million. If EMU doesn't cure unemployment it won't work. It will give every EU opposition party a scapegoat to blame for everything that goes wrong. The noble aim of a unified Europe will fail unless politicians can relieve the scourge of unemployment. EMU by itself won't be a panacea. A single currency will bring savings in transaction costs (offset by the costs of conversion) and low interest rates will boost business optimism. But a single monetary policy operated by an independent central bank is bound to produce distortions. Different countries will want differing rates of interest at various stages of the business cycle. But if interest rates can't be lowered, say, to suit Spain because Germany and France want them up, then Spain will suffer higher unemployment that cannot be cured — as it might be in the United States — by labour mobility. Labour isn't that mobile in the EU, and if it was, it wouldn't always speak the right language.

Two things need to be done to prevent economic malfunctions from undermining the political goals of the EU. First, labour markets must be made more flexible so that workers can move to where the jobs are and to enable companies to be more confident about employing new recruits. Second, there is a desperate need for new investment to create employment. As the Nobel Prize winner Franco Modigliani has pointed out, EU unemployment growth since the mid-1970s has coincided with a 33 per cent reduction in the share of GDP going to investment.

Small wonder that EMU is becoming increasingly unpopular among aspirant countries even where they have met the Maastricht criteria. Britain is still well advised to stay on the sidelines. It must ensure that the economy is sufficiently robust to be able to join when the moment is right yet preserve the flexibility to respond to the changed economic environment that EMU will inevitably bring. In these circumstances it is vital to have a much lower budget deficit than Britain is accustomed to so it can retain the fiscal flexibility to raise or lower taxes during a new era when, in or out of EMU, the Government won't be able to manipulate interest rates. Maybe this is the subtext of Gordon Brown's present cheeseparing approach. Meanwhile companies are already adopting the euro in droves. Any individual in Britain who wants to take out a euro account can do the same. The euro will come to Britain even if Britain doesn't go to it.

Contenders limber up in Germany

IF THERE were any doubt that Gerhard Schröder would become presidential candidate for the German Social Democrats, he ended it last weekend in Lower Saxony. Mr Schröder left his own target — of getting within 2 per cent of the SPD's previous election figure — way behind, increasing the party's vote by twice that amount. The congratulations of his rival, party leader Oskar Lafontaine, were graceful but inevitable: though party activists may have doubts, the electorate seems clear that Mr Schröder is the man to defeat Chancellor Kohl in September.

And if that is so, the reverse is also true: Mr Kohl is the only man who can defend the record of the Christian Democrats, whose own identity has been engrossed so largely into the chancellor's bulk over the past 16 years. He had intended to delay formal announcement of his intention to run again till after Easter, but the decisive result gave him no option but to declare that he was "it". Mr Schröder knows that the polls should not be taken for granted. Mr Kohl, he says, is still a "tough and dangerous" opponent, but one who is for the first time facing a tough and dangerous fight.

From Britain, or indeed any point in western Europe, the comparison between Mr Schröder and Tony Blair may be obvious, and remains apt. Mr Kohl demands to know what his new opponent stands for. It is a fair question: last weekend he was already shifting further away from his previous scepticism towards the euro, having prepared the ground by avoiding the issue at last December's party congress. Now he argues that it is coming anyway, and has moved on to stress the need for political integration to make it a long-term success. Mr Schröder's image of the New Centre to which he seeks to steer the SPD has much the same blurred focus as Blairite centrism. He stresses social harmony, known as "putting back society together again", but combines this with economic realism — to "reach a new middle ground" with the leaders of industry. Whether the two are really going to be compatible in a country with record post-war unemployment of 5 million is another matter.

Korea's priority in the north

IT IS not every new president whose official biography recounts how he was nearly assassinated by a previous regime. Nor that the people who kidnapped him and would have dumped him with weights tied to his legs in the sea — but for a lucky reprieve — worked for the man whom he now wants to become prime minister. The story of Kim Dae-jung is as remarkable as that of Nelson Mandela, with whom he is often compared. And the new story of South Korea, which began last week with his inaugural ceremony, looks like being a dramatic one too.

The economic crisis in which South Korea is floundering — with 1 million jobs likely to be lost this year — creates extreme difficulty for an incoming president after an election in which, for the first time, the ruling party's candidate has been defeated. Mr Kim has appealed for the opposition to give him a year's grace. Last week they boycotted a vote on the appointment as prime minister of Mr Kim's expediently chosen coalition partner (and ex-founder of the Korean CIA) Kim Jong-pil. But however this problem is resolved, Mr Kim still has the virtue of making a clean start.

Mr Kim scores by recognising that his country's troubles do not merely stem from bad debts, over-diversification and other forms of economic error. He speaks instead of a "collusive link between politics and business" and insists that "political reform must precede everything else". Korea is a society whose political culture is still heavily marked by patronage, deference and collusion — the same evils which have held back real change in Japan. Instead Mr Kim promises participatory democracy — government by the people. It may only be rhetoric so far, but it is new rhetoric.

Mr Kim's biggest unknown factor lies across the Demilitarised Zone in Pyongyang. His call for reconciliation last week was fresher in tone than the familiar proposals it contained. But it did include one important new element — the suggestion that South Korea would not object if Pyongyang improved relations separately with Washington or Tokyo: Seoul's distaste for an international dimension to intra-Korean relations has previously been an obstacle — though the bigger problems have come from Pyongyang. Mr Kim says that re-unification will take time. The real extent of famine in the North is still obscure: South Korean officials have not helped by claiming that the food shortage has been invented by the Pyongyang regime. The last thing that anyone in Seoul wants is for a destitute North to collapse into the arms of a crisis-bound South. Yet if the president's new tone leads to more practical gestures — such as lifting outdated bans on contacts with the North — that will be a hopeful step forward.

Murdoch diminished by bowing to China

Andrew Neil

FOR those of us able to read the runes of Rupert Murdoch's empire the key words were "negative aspects": they confirmed that the great media mogul's fingerprints were all over the decision to dump Chris Patten's memoirs of his years in Hong Kong — and that he had made his views known to his minions in a typically robust manner.

"KRM [Keith Rupert Murdoch] has outlined to me the negative aspects of publication, which I fully understand," wrote Eddie Bell, the boss of the British arm of HarperCollins, to Anthea Disney, his overseer in New York, towards the end of January. Bell, a blunt Scotsman, is not usually noted for understatement; but this time his words masked the anger emanating from his master's voice.

"Kill the book!" Murdoch had shouted to Disney in his New York office earlier that month, his hand thumping the table for added emphasis. He had been angry when he learned HarperCollins had acquired the rights last year and indicated several times that he would prefer not to proceed with publication. But nothing had happened. Now he was furious: "Kill the f****** book!"

Similar strong sentiments were expressed to Bell in bad-tempered phone calls, vintage examples of the brutal telephone terrorism by which he rules his worldwide empire, enabling him to strike fear at any time even in his most peripheral domains. Bell and Disney were left in no doubt that they had a very unhappy proprietor on their hands.

The mystery is that they ever wanted to publish Patten in the first place. You did not have to be a rocket scientist to realise that the ex-governor of Hong Kong would be highly critical of China, whose communist despots had regularly snubbed him and tried to thwart his every effort to introduce some democracy into the former British colony. Nor was it exactly a secret that Murdoch was extremely sensitive about being seen to be responsible for anything critical of China's rulers.

He had booted the BBC off his pan-Asian Star satellite system in 1994 to appease Beijing when it had broadcast a documentary critical of Mao and the Chinese ruling élite. He sold his stake in the then outspoken South China Morning Post to avoid daily offending the Chinese government. He had published a boring and largely unread hagiography of Deng Xiaoping by the Chinese supreme leader's very own daughter to ingratiate himself with the then ruling family.

Bell and Disney had plenty of evidence that Murdoch had become a serial kow-tower to China and that clinching the rights to Patten's book was not going to be regarded as the publishing coup of the decade by their master. His reaction was likely to be all the more fierce given his personal animosity towards Patten.

"It may be just my wallet talking," he said to me in 1993, "but I think Patten is making a hash of it. He's trying to make a name for himself back in Britain; but he's a lightweight who's screwing everything up." For courtiers to survive at the Court of King Rupert, they have to be adept at anticipating their master's wishes and acting in his interests. Bell and Disney have failed on both these scores and must now await the Sun King's further wrath. I fear that Bell is not long for HarperCollins. Disney will survive, but she is damaged goods and Murdoch has a long memory for those who fail him.

Never before has Murdoch got himself into such an indefensible position. He has always attracted controversy but he has usually offended the chattering classes for good reason: on the move to Wapping, tabloid journalism, Sky TV, so-called predatory pricing and other media matters he has always had a good case to make.

But he has left himself without a leg to stand on with the Patten scandal. As one senior Wapping insider put it to me: "He's up shit creek without a teaspoon, never mind a paddle."

Now surrounded by sycophants, he was told by his PR people in the United States that dumping the book would be a storm in a teacup — even that they might be able to hush the whole thing up. When that was revealed clearly to be nonsense the black arts of the spin-doctor were employed: journalists were briefed to write that the book was a dodo, even though Stuart Proffitt, HarperCollins's senior editor, was already on record describing it as "enormously impressive". The number of lies told to excuse Murdoch's actions are a fair measure of how indefensible they were.

CRUCIALLY, Murdoch at last secured carriage of his Star TV channel on a Chinese cable system early this year after four years of cosying up to the Chinese authorities. He cannot exploit the enormous Chinese market for his pay-TV services without the co-operation of the ruling communist élite. Now he has a toe-hold he does not want to jeopardise it by publishing something nasty about it.

The man who stood shoulder-to-shoulder with me when the Sunday Times took an unpopular hawkish line against the Soviet empire in the 1980s is now involved in some heavy petting with an equally totalitarian system. Thank God he had no Russian business interests 10 years ago.

"Rupert is not stupid," one of his senior courtiers told me last weekend. "He's made a simple business calculation: all the flak he's getting in Britain is worth it if you keep open the opportunity to make billions of dollars in China."

Maybe. But I cannot help feeling the Patten episode is a turning point in Murdoch's affairs. It is not just the usual suspects that are ganging up against him: even such rightwing authors as Simon Heffer are deserting HarperCollins. When his newspapers next shout freedom-of-the-press to see off privacy laws, they will be greeted with a hollow laugh.

The Patten scandal has devalued the status of everything he publishes. Reputations have been sacrificed for commercial gain. It need not have been this way. Even ruthless, competitive businessmen can behave with integrity. But the man who once told me there had to be a "moral compass" in everything we did has shown neither integrity nor morality in his handling of Patten's book. It is a sorry tale from which he emerges a diminished, tarnished figure.

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The Washington Post

Iraq Wins a Round – But It's Not Over Yet

OPINION
Jim Hoagland

WINNING in the Middle East is a short-term, illusory exercise. No victory is stable in a region so marked by profound social and economic fracture and constant political betrayal. Grim survival, to fight and perhaps lose on another day, is top prize.

That is why Americans should not be too upset, or outraged, that Saddam Hussein rakes in most of the short-term gains of the latest U.S.-Iraqi confrontation. The Iraqi dictator will squander those gains, which lie more in the realm of psychology than real diplomatic or military advantage. If he does not, the United States still has the capability to take them away from him.

The question is whether President Clinton has the grit and resolve to use that capability in Iraq. The management of the first phase of this crisis — which is not over — unfortunately does not provide a conclusive answer.

Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott and other Republicans exaggerate when they accuse Clinton of having made a bargain with the devil, in the form of U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, to "subcontract" U.S. foreign policy and further a strategy of "aggressive multilateralism."

That overestimates the amount of deliberate strategy, and underestimates the amount of desperation, that marked the Clintonites' use of Annan and his dash to Baghdad. That mission was directed at getting Clinton out of confrontation for which he was not yet ready, as well as avoiding the damage a U.S. attack would bring to Iraqi civilians.

The text Annan brought back contained no serious violation of the conditions the United States and Britain had set for staying military action now. But there were serious and surprising gaps, especially on procedures for future inspections.

Those gaps will have to be worked out not by Annan but by Richard Butler, the head of the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) inspection teams that Saddam wants to block. With strong U.S. backing, Butler and his American deputies can shape the agreement into an arrangement that either protects the integrity of the weapons inspections or makes Saddam responsible for the agreement's failure.

That breach, in turn, will lead to "the severest consequences," a phrase that Russia, France, the United States, Britain and China agreed to include in the negotiating brief Annan took to Baghdad.

It is Annan's performance since he returned from Baghdad that has awarded Saddam consequential gains. Somewhere between the Euphrates and the Hudson rivers the highly competent, steely Ghanaian diplomat metamorphosed into Miss Manners, accepting Saddam Hussein as an expert of decorum.

Most troubling was the warm way in which Annan, speaking to reporters in New York last week, embraced Saddam as a decisive leader who deserved more respect from Butler's inspectors. Suddenly the top civil servant at the United Nations, which had previously vowed to ostracize and tame the Iraqi dictator, treated him as a sensitive and caring negotiating partner.

Saddam will market at home Annan's misguided praise of him as a statesman as proof that the world is relaxing its opposition to the terror and hardship Saddam inflicts on his people. It is oxygen to him.

I doubt that Annan believes Saddam has suddenly had a character transplant. He seems to expect that offering Saddam some dignity and new legitimacy will encourage him to behave responsibly and live up to his word.

That was the approach George Bush and Jim Baker tried on Saddam before they started calling him Hitler Jr. That is the kind of human charity that Bill Clinton expressed in saying Saddam might undergo a conversion someday, and then minimizing his depredations for six years. Praise and sympathy encourage Saddam not to responsible behavior but to new outrage.

Ask the Kuwaitis, who helped pay for his war against Iran and then got invaded by him. Ask his political associates who invariably wind up dead for getting too close to him. Annan should remember that it is not fatal to be Saddam's enemy, but to be his friend.

Saddam's gains are likely to be ephemeral and Clinton may well get another chance at military action, for which he should be better prepared. In the end, Saddam and Clinton are on irreconcilable paths. The Iraqi will not permit inspections that endanger his hold on chemical and biological weapons. Clinton and his aides have made dramatic statements about such weapons and about Iraq in this crisis that have alerted the American public to the dangers of doing nothing. The showdown is still to come.

Tensions Could Spark Fighting in Angola

Lynne Duke in Huambo, Angola

A VERITABLE museum of destruction, Huambo's bomb-cratered streets, bullet-splattered houses and blasted high-rise buildings are constant reminders of war's ubiquitous menace.

But one need not look to ruins of past battles to know that menace still stalks Huambo. Here in the central highlands region and elsewhere in battle-ravaged Angola, there are increasingly frequent reports of bridges blown up or new land mines laid or planes flying in weapons or crackdowns by government forces or ambushes on the roads or rebel forces massing. Technically, Angola is at peace. But, like war, it can be hell.

"I get very upset," said Alfredo de Deus Sacotingo, 23, a teacher wounded in the 1994 siege of Huambo. "We are young boys, and we would be forced to take part in armed force. Our future will be threatened."

Sacotingo's fear also plagues the government, the United Nations and other international mediators: that as Angola's 39-month-old peace process struggles through a profoundly treacherous phase, tensions surrounding the dismantling of the UNITA rebel movement eventually could boil over into renewed guerrilla conflict or prompt a government move to crush UNITA.

At issue is whether UNITA's headquarters at Bailundo, as well as several other towns in a strategic buffer around it, will be handed over soon for government administration. Jonas Savimbi, the skillful tactician who once was a U.S. Cold War proxy and is among the world's longest-surviving rebel leaders, agreed in writing that such a handover would occur by last Saturday.

But as U.N. observers and government officials have extended state administration to towns closer and closer to Bailundo, they have met increasing hostility — at the negotiating table and on the ground. Diplomats said the handover would not occur last weekend.

UNITA — the National Union for the Total Liberation of Angola — justifies its delays, in part, by pointing to the hard line government troops have taken in crackdowns on former UNITA towns, settling scores with old foes who then do the same in return.

"The degree of mistrust is tremendous here. Tremendous," said Behrooz Sadry, a U.N. assistant secretary general who is supervising the Angolan peace process. "Perhaps we've tied one of their hands behind their back, but the other is still holding a knife."

The peace process began with the November 1994 signing of the Lusaka peace accord after a government siege of Huambo forced UNITA to flee to Bailundo and negotiate for peace. With that document, UNITA and the government of President Jose Eduardo dos Santos agreed to end their 19-year war.

The United Nations dubbed it the "worst war in the world," especially the final two years, when Huambo and Kuito, to the east, and other interior towns were pummeled by repeated sieges. Hundreds of thousands of people were killed or maimed, mainly by land mines. Amid deepening government corruption and the continued militarization of the national budget, not even the nation's tremendous oil wealth has rescued Angola from economic crisis.

Despite these high stakes, the peace process teeters on the brink of derailment as Savimbi faces his biggest hurdle: giving up his heartland or facing the consequences. The United Nations has lost patience and may soon pull out or impose new sanctions on UNITA, which has flouted arms, travel and flight prohibitions already brought against it. The government wants the United Nations to leave, a source close to the peace process said, as hawks in the military are bristling to act.

Though negotiating maneuvers have not yet been exhausted and the United Nations continues to try to manage a volatile situation, the threat of eventual military action against UNITA looms large, say diplomats in the capital, Luanda.

"They have a signed UNITA commitment to take certain actions by February 28th," said a source close to the peace process. Once that date passes, "if they want to send troops into these places, they can send troops into these places."

The source expressed doubt that the government would move just yet into Bailundo or the nearby town of Andulo, where Savimbi often resides. But other towns in that strategic region could be hit, the source said.

UNITA has complied with the Lusaka accord to the extent of sending some of its 70 politicians into the national parliament and four into the cabinet, where a more moderate form of opposition is practiced in what is called a "unity" government.

Abel Chivukuvuku, president of the UNITA bench in parliament, said, "The problem is fear. UNITA people fear that the [ruling party] will never rest easy near UNITA," he said. He denied that the movement is preparing for war but said it is "not a monolithic political entity" and is "shaking," but not breaking, under the strains of its disparate elements — "being an opposition, being a political party, having elements of the old guerrilla force. It's not easy to manage all this."

Russia To Bury Czar in St. Petersburg

David Hoffman in Moscow

RUSSIA closed a painful chapter in its search for a post-Soviet identity last week by formally deciding to bury the remains of the last czar, Nicholas II, and members of his family in St. Petersburg on July 17, the 80th anniversary of their murder by Bolshevik revolutionaries.

The decision, announced by Deputy Prime Minister Boris Nemtsov, caps a tortuous and emotion-laden debate about the authenticity of the remains found more than six years ago in a pit in Yekaterinburg and about the significance of the Romanov monarchy for Russia.

The outcome has been such a point of contention that President Boris Yeltsin, who had been expected to settle the issue, sidestepped making the final choice, and ordered the Russian Cabinet to decide. Ever since the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia has been groping for symbols and substance to define its new statehood. There are still deep divisions and ambivalence about those symbols, which have often clouded the debate over where to inter the last monarch.

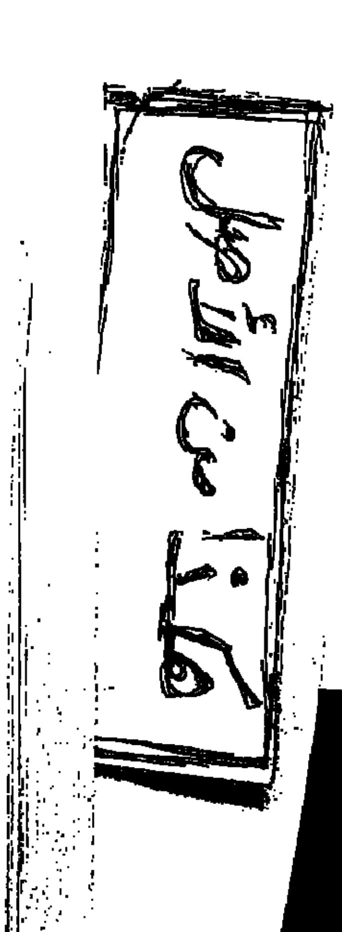
Nemtsov, chairman of a commission formed in 1993 to investigate the remains, said they will be interred in the St. Peter and Paul fortress in St. Petersburg, where all Russian monarchs since Peter the Great have been laid to rest.

In addition to the symbolism of a final burial for the royal family, the choice of a site was the subject of a quarrel between Yekaterinburg, where the Romanovs were killed by a firing squad; Moscow, the booming center of Russian capitalism; and St. Petersburg, the czarist capital and scene of the revolution that toppled their reign. All three cities wanted to capitalize on the Romanovs as a tourist attraction.

The tug-of-war over their final resting place struck many as a final indignity for the murdered royal family. Eduard Radzinsky, a biographer of the czar who served on the commission, has called the debate a "second execution."

Although some continue to dispute the authenticity of the remains, which are now in Yekaterinburg, three independent examinations have matched genetic material from Nicholas's bones with DNA from distant relatives. Other tests have proven that the bones of Nicholas and four of the other skeletons are related.

Examinations have indicated that those are the remains of Alexandra and daughters Tatiana, Olga and Anatsia. The bodies of daughter Marie and Alexei, Nicholas' son and heir, are believed to have been burned by the assassins. The other remains are those of Anna Demidova, Alexandra's lady-in-waiting, the physician Eugene Botkin, the cook Ivan Kharitonov, and valet Alouzy Trupp.



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Oprah Case Jurors Reject Texans' Beef

Sue Anne Pressley in Amarillo

AFTER nearly six weeks, untold legal fees and long arguments about agricultural economics and freedom of speech, the case of the Texas cattlemen against talk show host Oprah Winfrey was resolved last week: Oprah won.

The jury decided that Winfrey, her Harpo Productions Inc. and Howard Lyman, a guest on her show, did not hurt four Amarillo ranching families and their cattle companies with an April 16, 1996, show on mad cow disease. The plaintiffs claimed that comments made during the program, including Winfrey's disgusted vow that she would never eat another hamburger, caused cattle prices to plummet, costing them about $11 million.

Lead plaintiff Paul Engler, vowed to appeal the verdict.

The episode in question was aired after news outlets reported that at least 10 people in Britain died of a brain-wasting ailment which they contracted from eating beef contaminated when cattle were fed protein supplements produced from the wastes of slaughtered cattle. Lyman, a former Montana rancher and now an official with the Humane Society of the United States, compared the mysterious disease and its long incubation period to AIDS and speculated that it already is rampant among American cattle. The show never touched specifically on Texas cattle or named the plaintiffs; but they argued that Winfrey's influence was so great that they suffered devastating financial losses simply as a result of the program's airing.



Oprah Winfrey celebrates the court ruling last week PHOTO: L MOTRERO

Originally, the cattlemen's suit was seen as the first major test of the constitutionality of "veggie libel" laws, which have been enacted in Texas and a dozen other states in recent years to protect perishable agricultural products from unsubstantiated attacks about their safety. Critics have expressed fear the laws could have a muzzling effect on free speech. But in a surprise move U.S. District Judge Mary Lou Robinson ruled that the case could not continue under the agriculture disparagement law. The judge's move reduced the suit to a basic business defamation case. That imposed on the cattle ranchers a higher burden of proof.

Jurors explained they were influenced by concerns about First Amendment guarantees of freedom of speech. After the verdict, juror Pat Gowdy told reporters: "We felt that a lot of rights have eroded in this country. Our freedom of speech may be the only one we have left to regain what we've lost."

Winfrey said that point had become clear to her during the trial. "I believed from the beginning, this was an attempt to muzzle this voice," she said.

America's Long Goodbye to Reagan

OPINION
Ellen Goodman

THERE ARE times when words really do fail us. We don't always have the vocabulary — the nouns, the adjectives — to properly describe the range of experience.

This time it was the verbs that came up as paupers. The simplest verbs in our language — "was" and "is" — were inadequate for the task facing the friends and family of Ronald Reagan, the president now crippled with Alzheimer's.

Speaking in a masterful documentary on PBS, the tenses kept slipping out of gear. Some said, "He was . . ." Others said, "He is . . . " It was as if the speaker could not decide whether the Reagan he knew still existed.

This language became the tragic background to the memoir of a man who no longer remembers. To the story of a president who can no longer be a source on his own presidency. To the completed history of a man who is still alive.

If these people were tongue-tied, it was because there was/is no correct tense to describe the existence of a person with advanced Alzheimer's. This is a disease that attacks the brain's hard drive like a computer virus, erasing personality byte by byte. It leaves behind a man who *is* no longer himself. No longer who he *was*.

This was not the first time I had been struck by such sounds. Two winters ago a star-studded celebration was held for Reagan's 85th birthday. As the awkward televised festivities went on, I was struck by how hard it was for the celebrants, to get to grips with a disease that alters identity. Had the Reagan they were toasting really turned 85? Or had he never truly gotten beyond 83, the year he told us he had Alzheimer's? What is the meaning of identity in people who outlive their conscious life?

These are questions that plague those who live in the aura of Alzheimer's. There are about 4 million Americans with this dementia. But Reagan is the first man to engage the entire country in what families of the afflicted describe as the long goodbye.

Today, he lives a private and protected life at some point on the sliding scale of the disease. Every time the ex-presidents meet, one is absent. And at every absence there is the reminder of his presence, not as some Alzheimer's poster boy, but as a shadow: the man who was/is.

As national family members we only wince. It's the family and friends who truly suffer. These are the people left facing and caring for a stranger in familiar shape.

Today, Patti finds ease in the fact that she reconciled with her father while he still understood. Ron Jr. takes honest if chilly comfort in the fact that they were already prepped in his father's remoteness. Both let us understand that their father is no longer available.

Dr. Steven DeKosky, director of the Alzheimer's Disease Research Center at the University of Pittsburgh, says that people who deal with Alzheimer's often talk of two selves: the then-self and the now-self. When families and doctors make decisions about living wills or experimental treatment, they ask what the woman she *was* would want for the woman she *is*.

Yet we have only known about this disease for 20 years. As DeKosky says, "We can talk about people who have cancer, strokes, heart attacks but this is wholly new. We haven't yet learned how you talk about the loss of self."

Over three years ago, Reagan wrote the country a brave and fond farewell letter: "I now begin the journey that will lead me into the sunset of my life." In the long shadows of this sunset, we have inherited the deeply sad obligation to understand what was/is. His farewell was just the beginning of our long goodbye.

Corruption Is a Hard Act to Follow

Molly Moore in Mexico City

BEHOLD the inheritance bequeathed to the first elected mayor of this mammoth metropolis in modern history: Hundreds of computers wiped clean of all data, a payroll on which one of every 10 paid employees never showed up for work and a property office that couldn't account for almost half the city-owned real estate. And that was just for starters.

In the three months since Cuauhtemoc Cardenas and his opposition party took control of the city administration from ruling-party appointees who had run it for nearly seven decades, officials have excavated levels of corruption so pervasive that one of the mayor's cabinet members described the government as "one big, black enterprise."

The capital's "successive governments promoted and legitimized corruption as a 'normal' way of life and work, and implemented it as the unwritten norm for the relations between officials and citizens," said Cardenas, a member of the left-of-center Party of the Democratic Revolution, who campaigned on promises to clean up city hall.

Allegations of corruption are hardly new in a city where citizens routinely pay bribes to obtain a water or telephone hookup, a driver's license or other government services. But as opposition leaders in the capital and elsewhere begin to break the grip of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), Mexico's government is undergoing a new revolution — the birth of this democracy's first independent system of checks and balances.

Using legal weapons that were virtually unheard-of in Mexico three years ago, newly elected opposition mayors, governors and members of Congress are launching unprecedented investigations and audits of government corruption and ineptness. No longer just the subject of speculation and rumors that were swept under the carpet of one-party rule, government scandals are the daily fodder of headlines in the national and local press.

"What we are having is full exposure," said Sergio Aguayo, president of the Civic Alliance, a private, good-government advocacy group. "That is an important aspect of the change we need. Democracy is not only free and fair elections. We have to create the laws and institutions that will sustain a culture of accountability."

The emerging view of the seamy side of Mexico City's government — which administers to 8.5 million residents inside the city limits of the federal district — has surprised even critics of the ruling party. "We've found even more than we expected," said Jesus Gonzalez Schmal, Cardenas' chief administrator. "It penetrated the entire administration."

City prosecutor Samuel del Villar estimated that as much as 40 percent of the city's $4.5 billion annual revenue is stolen by criminal organizations within the city government, dishonest employees and inefficiency. "We are just looking at the tip of the iceberg," del Villar said in an interview. "We don't know how big it is."

Former PRI mayor Oscar Espinosa Villarreal, who has since been appointed federal secretary of tourism, has said little publicly about the allegations. But one of his former cabinet members, whom he permitted to be interviewed on the condition that his name not be used, said, "It is false that the problem is of the dimensions they said it is. It is impossible. We systematically fought corruption. Some of the cases they are presenting now were started during our administration."

Cardenas concedes it will be difficult to prove many of the allegations in court because so many records from previous administrations have been destroyed or are in disarray. In addition, the city workers' union is fiercely protective of employees, many civil servants fear speaking out, and many others have no interest in changing a system that has been used to supplement their meager salaries.

Examples of alleged corruption include:

- ❑ Dozens of city offices were stripped of computers, telephones, furniture and files when the previous administration left office.
- ❑ The city public relations office paid $260,000 to nearly 100 reporters in an effort to win the administration favorable coverage; 3? computers purchased for the city's public relations department were given as gifts to reporters, and the administration listed 54 press advisers on its payroll who had no job descriptions and no apparent duties.
- ❑ Of the 16,000 city-owned vehicles Cardenas' administration has located, 4,000 are unusable without extensive repairs and 2,000 are in such poor condition that they should be sold as junk — even though millions of dollars in fake bills were submitted to the city for vehicle maintenance. Hundreds more — particularly late-model autos — disappeared in the final months of the previous administration.
- ❑ About 90 percent of all the citations issued to vehicles for violating pollution standards in 1997 were imposed on cars and trucks that were operating within the law, yet none of the approximately $1.6 million in fines was forwarded to city coffers.
- ❑ Criminal organizations with sources working in the city's computing offices continue to electronically steal city funds and divert them to private bank accounts. "Hackers know the new passwords almost immediately," said a senior city official involved in financial investigations. "We've had people brought in who were trained by the U.S. Federal Reserve, and we still can't find out how they're doing it."
- ❑ City officials say they cannot identify 22,000 of the city's estimated 50,000 buildings and properties because records don't exist. In one case, Salvador Martinez Della Rocca, the government administrator for the Tlalpan precinct in southern Mexico City, discovered the city had paid tens of thousands of dollars in rent for a government-owned building that was used as a political office for the PRI for the past 16 years. When he confronted PRI members working at the building, Martinez said, he found copies of keys to all of the precinct's main government offices, including his, as well as plans for sabotaging the new administration. "At night they could have easy access to the offices with little complicity from employees," he said.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
March 8 1998

Puerto Rico, Drugs Gateway to the U.S.

Douglas Farah and Serge F. Kovaleski in San Juan

A SHIFT in tactics by cocaine and heroin traffickers has made this island territory the most important way station of a burgeoning smuggling route through the Caribbean, according to law enforcement officials and experts on the drug trade.

Colombian drug cartels, which produce virtually all of the world's cocaine and an increasing amount of its heroin, have shipped most of their U.S.-bound drugs through Mexico in recent years. While that remains the dominant route, stepped-up interdiction efforts at the U.S.-Mexico border — plus the ever-increasing demands of Mexican traffickers — have led the Colombians to diversify by putting new emphasis on the Caribbean.

The Colombian cartels have subcontracted their Caribbean smuggling to Puerto Rico-based trafficking gangs whose leaders are from the Dominican Republic, according to law enforcement officials. The Dominicans ship the cocaine and heroin via islands throughout the Caribbean, often using small, fast boats that are almost certain to escape detection by law enforcement agencies — and that can easily outrun any patrol craft that happens to get lucky.

A given shipment of cocaine or heroin might hopscotch its way north through several island nations, authorities say. But for the Dominican traffickers, all roads eventually lead to Puerto Rico. Since Puerto Rico is a U.S. territory, there are no customs checks between the island and the American mainland.



"Once the drugs are in Puerto Rico, they might as well be in Kansas," said Felix Jimenez, special agent in charge of the Caribbean for the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). "There are 72 flights a day from here to the mainland, and San Juan is the busiest port in the Caribbean and the fourth-busiest in the United States. You can put coke on a plane here and have it in Los Angeles in less than 24 hours."

The U.N. Drug Control Program, in a report to a regional conference held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, in December, estimated that 250 tons of cocaine destined for the U.S. market, or about 40 percent of the total, passes through the Caribbean.

In addition, law enforcement officials said, almost all the growing flow of Colombian heroin now passes through Puerto Rico on its way to the lucrative markets of the eastern seaboard of the United States.

The illicit flow of cocaine and heroin has brought with it a sharp increase in crime and drug abuse, with National Guardsmen at times patrolling the most drug-infested housing projects here and police sealing off whole neighborhoods for drug sweeps. The drug trade, Gov. Pedro Rossello said in a recent interview, "is the biggest threat that we have to the existence of our society as we know it."

Rossello said drug trafficking "has wreaked havoc on Puerto Rico" and is his administration's top priority. "It has poisoned our youth and injured our capability for the future," he said. "All we want to do is raise the resistance so that the traffic will be shifted elsewhere."

Rossello is not alone in his lament. Throughout the Caribbean, authorities say drug trafficking has brought new social, political and economic problems that threaten to overwhelm often fragile governments.

For example, in the Dominican Republic — the home of the major new Caribbean traffickers — officials estimate that of a population of 8 million, at least half a million Dominicans used cocaine or marijuana last year. Officials estimate that as much as $1 billion in illegal drug profits was laundered through the nation's financial system last year. Of 10,000 drug cases in the past seven years, fewer than 100 have resulted in prison sentences.

Coffee has taken a back seat as Colombian cartels have subcontracted their Caribbean smuggling to Puerto Rican-based gangs

The drugs brought into Puerto Rico arrive largely in low-riding "go-fast" boats. Using Global Positioning System devices that allow drug loads to be located on the high seas with great ease and accuracy, several small boats will often converge on a single large load dropped from the air or a larger ship. If police presence is detected, the speedy boats split up and head in different directions.

And the drug traffickers are constantly innovating. Last year they began to use small, semi-submersible boats that could carry up to 440 pounds of cocaine all the way from Colombia to Puerto Rico. The boats rode low enough to be almost covered by the sea, making them virtually undetectable.

In one of the largest raids ever carried out here, Puerto Rican police arrested 1,039 people on December 17 in a series of raids across the island. The raids netted 1,356 3.5-ounce bags of cocaine; 133 small bags of heroin; 58 firearms; 60 vehicles and $205,582 in cash, according to Puerto Rican law enforcement officials.

Using evidence gathered in the raids, the police said, they were able to bring murder charges against 40 people, including Wess Solano Moretta, alleged leader of one of San Juan's most powerful drug organizations.

"They [Colombian drug trafficking organizations] have persons in charge of distribution, laundering, records and exporting," said Puerto Rico's attorney general, Jose Fuentes Agostini. "The Colombians are operating like a giant corporation with different levels of management and subsidiaries in different countries."

The drugs leave Puerto Rico in every imaginable way, according to law enforcement officials. Smugglers favor cargo ship containers, but also use commercial airline flights, cruise ships and express mail.

Between October 1996 and June 1997, a joint task force led by the Coast Guard seized 24,000 pounds of illegal drugs on the high seas as the drug traffickers were attempting to reach Puerto Rico, according to Adm. Robert E. Kramek, commandant of the Coast Guard. The drugs had a street value of $1 billion, he said.

On July 31, federal agents arrested more than a dozen people working for Delta Air Lines. They were charged with organizing shipments of cocaine on Delta during a three-year period. DEA officials said the alleged smuggling ring introduced between 13,200 and 22,000 pounds of cocaine into the United States during that time. The street value of the drugs was more than $1 billion, the DEA said.

Although the transshipment of drugs through here is a concern, officials and residents say the greater devastation is caused by the cocaine and heroin left behind as payment for the services of those involved in the drug trade. It is not hard to find evidence of the impact.

The windows of the guard houses at Las Margaritas housing project here in San Juan are pocked with bullet holes. Those wishing to enter the complex, with its bare courtyards and its graffiti-covered walls, must have their identification checked by riot-equipped National Guardsmen brandishing M-16 rifles. Despite this military presence, residents say, gunfire still pierces the night. Drug dealers still manage to do business.

Not far away, in a neighborhood called Barrio Figueroa, police sealed off an area of several square blocks one recent night and then swooped in from all sides. Rows of haggard, dazed men and women were flushed out of narrow alleys and run-down wooden houses. Police lined them up against a cement wall and frisked them, quickly filling a large plastic bag with crack pipes, syringes and small bags of drugs. Other residents heckled from their windows, asking why the cops were going after such small fry instead of the big fish who run the drug trade.

Of the 868 murders in 1996 on this island of 3.7 million people, 8C percent were directly related tc drug trafficking, said Pedro Toledo the police superintendent. Another 10 percent of the homicides were in directly attributable to drug trafficking, he said. In 1986, only 30 percen of the island's murders were drug related, officials said.

Cocaine Traffickers 'Are Buying Haiti'

Serge F. Kovaleski in Port-au-Prince, Haiti

LAST MARCH, authorities arrested a Colombian man as he arrived at the international airport here lugging several suitcases stuffed with 1,650 pounds of cocaine destined for the United States. Two weeks later, under mysterious circumstances, the suspect was allowed to leave Haiti unpunished, according to Haitian and U.S. law enforcement sources. In the words of one U.S. investigator, "No one knows what happened to him or the drugs."

Around the same time, a Haitian driving through Port-au-Prince was pulled over in a routine traffic stop by police, who discovered 22 pounds of cocaine stashed in the trunk of the car. But a senior government official soon ordered the release of the driver and his car, law enforcement sources said.

In November, police seized a large cocaine shipment from a truck apparently en route to the neighboring Dominican Republic that they had detained at a roadblock in the southern port town of Miragoane. Within hours, a group of the officers was back at the station dividing a large chunk of the find among themselves. This time, though, part of the haul was recovered by anti-drug police, who also arrested seven officers, as well as a justice of the peace.

When the Clinton administration spearheaded an international mission in 1994 to reinstate democratic rule in Haiti, rebuilding the country's crooked and dysfunctional law enforcement institutions was to be a cornerstone of the effort. The military government at the time had for years forged strong, lucrative ties with South American drug traffickers, giving several notorious drug lords carte blanche to live and conduct business here. U.S. officials hoped to move the traffickers out.

Today, however, a growing epidemic of drug-related corruption is poisoning that U.S.-backed endeavor and allowing Colombia's powerful cocaine and heroin cartels to utilize this impoverished Caribbean island more than ever as a major transit point to the United States. Now that the U.N. peacekeeping mission here has ended, authorities fear the situation may get worse.

In recent months, nearly three dozen officials — police officers, a prosecutor, two judges, mayors, council members — have been arrested on drug charges that include complicity in drug trafficking and dealing. The crackdown has been part of an attempt by President Rene Preval to counter what many observers consider the most serious threat to this nation's fragile democracy.

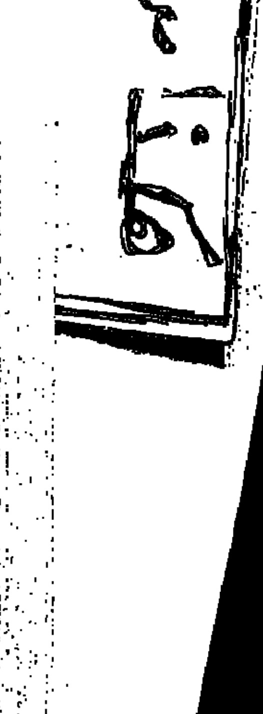
"Nowhere does a narco-dollar go further today than in Haiti," said another U.S. investigator, referring to the ease with which cartels can smuggle and harbor drugs here. "As a transshipment venue and a 'stash house' for traffickers, Haiti is bigger than ever."

"People, including some police, are so desperate for food and other things that dealing drugs or working for drug traffickers would not be a second thought for many Haitians. Look what happened in Flamand," said Port-au-Prince street vendor Michelle Beaux, 28, referring to an incident last November when people in a southern fishing village attacked smugglers transferring drugs from a vessel and split u[p] more than 1.5 tons of cocaine to sell.

The porous border between Hait[i] and the Dominican Republic en[ables] Haitian smugglers — some times police officers — to delive[r] narcotics freely from the largely u[n]protected shores of their country t[o] their Dominican counterpart[s]. They, in turn, move the contraban[d] into the United States by boat o[r] plane, mostly through the U.S. terri[tory] of Puerto Rico.

Observers noted, however, th[at] one break with the past has bee[n] the creation of the Haitian Nation[al] Police department's Office of the I[n]spector General, which has gon[e] after corrupt officers. More th[an] 200 officers have been fired for re[a]sons from alleged drug trafficki[ng] and dealing to excessive force. [At] least 60 are in prison awaiting tri[al] and Preval is considering appoi[nt]ing a special prosecutor to hand[le] the increasing number of cases.





Marriage of Money and Art

Michael Dirda

PLEASURE WARS
The Bourgeois Experience:
Victoria to Freud, Vol. V
By Peter Gay
Norton. 324 pp. $29.95

PETER GAY first made his reputation as a distinguished historian and interpreter of the 18th-century Enlightenment, stressing, among other matters, that the philosophers of the age of rationalism were a lot more impulsive and emotional than had been commonly imagined. Then, in mid-career, the Yale historian (now emeritus) began to study and write about Freud, often defending the great thinker's ideas and accomplishment during an age of sometimes virulent criticism. Gay even undertook psychoanalytic training, so that he now regards himself as "a historian informed by psychoanalysis."

Fourteen years ago, starting with The Tender Passion (1984), Gay embarked on a five-part history of the American and European bourgeoisie during the 19th century from, as he has it, "Victoria to Freud." That first volume, along with the second, The Education Of The Senses (1986), explored the complexities of Victorian attitudes toward love and the body, disclosing the existence of far more variety, openness and joy in sexual matters than had hitherto been imagined. These books were followed by The Cultivation Of Hatred (1993), an examination of how the 19th century came to understand and harness man's destructive urges. Most recently, Volume IV, The Naked Heart (1995), peered into the inner life, and discussed the legacy of romanticism, from the rise of biography and autobiography to nervous ailments, from the German custom of student dueling to the insights of satirists and wits.

Like its four predecessors, Pleasure Wars — a study of how the bourgeoisie responded to the new in art, music and literature — "may be read as a protest against cliches that have long served to caricature nineteenth-century bourgeois as canting hypocrites, money-crazed and philistine, incapable of love, rationalistic and yet irrational . . ." All too often, Gay writes, "to many minds the Victorian decades stand . . . as a time of greed, lies and kitsch." He notes that "the perception of the bourgeois as the unreconstructed, philistine champions of ossified taste, as antimodernists incarnate, has retained its prestige to this day." In modernist myth the battle lines are always drawn between avant-garde artists and a conventional middle class.

Not true, asserts Gay. Or at least not entirely so. Once again, Gay hopes "to clarify [by duly complicating] important issues." As he suggested as long ago as 1984, in a general prologue to The Bourgeois Experience, the avant-garde "was no more unified than the middle classes that its articulate, self-elected spokesmen were savaging; many good bourgeois actually welcomed the new art and patronized it without condescension, while, on the other hand, many avant-garde artists and writers were solid bourgeois at heart." Who would have thought, for instance, that Baudelaire actually dedicated a volume of art criticism to the bourgeoisie as "the natural friends of the arts," as the founders of "collections, museums, galleries"? Or that the revolutionary painter Manet, whose nude "Olympia" shocked all Paris, aspired to the Legion d'honneur, and subscribed to two clipping services? Above all, Gay shows us what many Victorians actually believed: that "commerce and culture need not be enemies but can become partners, and enterprising, sensitive and well-informed bourgeois can make money serve civilization."

To this end Gay, as in the past, showers the reader with anecdote, quotation and revealing facts, all of which go far to indicate how strongly the middle classes supported and buttressed the cultural life of the 19th century. Gay relates the history of the Halle Orchestra of Manchester, entirely founded and supported by the city's industrialists. Though Flaubert consistently attacked the provincial bourgeoisie, research suggests that the novelist's own city, Rouen, was an oasis of amateur musical, artistic and scientific clubs and societies. Gay shows how critics (Sainte-Beuve), museum directors (Alfred Lichtwark of Hamburg's Kunsthalle) and patrons (the Havemeyers, the Cones, the Steins) welcomed and fostered new art, how the Impressionists learned their craft by copying old masters in those supposedly stultifying museums, how serialization made literature more affordable, and how even revolutionary architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh actually "got what he needed: discriminating and risk-taking clients." Not least, Gay reminds us that, no matter how alienating his art, "it was middle-class collectors who rescued Picasso from indigence and saved his career."

In short, "the fissures dividing aesthetic conservatives from their radical competitors ran not between the middle class and antibourgeois bohemians but between incompatible definitions of what is beautiful, or stirring, or elevating." While many bourgeois "did not have the right words for art or music, they had, often enough, the right feelings." Bourgeois collectors not only "followed the fashion," but "there were times when they made it." Not that it couldn't be difficult to accept innovation: "To appreciate the finest in art and music is a trial for human nature: it calls for the hard work of breaking the cake of custom for the sake of discriminating pleasures running counter to the pressure for simplicity and mere relaxation in rare leisure hours." And, of course, some artists found themselves more easily accepted than others:

"IN CONTRAST to the rising demand for the Impressionists, prices for Cezannes advanced with agonizing sluggishness. A well known incident of 1899 dramatizes this divergence: at an auction, when one of Cezanne's landscapes was knocked down for the substantial sum of 6,750 francs, the astonished audience wanted to know the name of the buyer, who stood up and identified himself: it was Claude Monet."

As he does in his other books in this engrossing series, Peter Gay deliberately writes an old-fashioned kind of "literary" history, witty, informative and fun to read even as one argues with some of the author's points or his slightly conservative bias. Certainly, the bourgeois often supported art, but, as Gay himself indicates, that art might be conventional more often than innovative.

Still, these are arguable cavils, and one can really only applaud and admire this grand historical enterprise. The five volumes may be read independently, as intelligent entertainment, but together they provide an eye-opening survey of 19th-century culture, a successor to what one might call the tradition of Taine, Halevy and Trevelyan. For Peter Gay, Clio is definitely and rightly still a Muse. Where else but in these relaxed pages would you discover that Chopin and Liszt charged 20 francs for a piano lesson (the regular piano teacher got only one)? Or learned about Emmanuel Geibel, a German poet "as uninventive as he was polished"? Or discovered that the great Viennese music critic Eduard Hanslick concluded, at the end of his career, that "the belief that critics leave their impress on composers, conductors or soloists, let alone the public, is little better than a fond illusion"? Pleasure Wars is worth reading for just such incidentals.

The long bibliographical essays in each installment of The Bourgeois Experience are themselves as interesting as the text they support, ranging through obscure archival material and half-forgotten works of history to the very latest journal articles, dissertations and fashionable scholarship. In short, Peter Gay's are the kind of books you can read straight through with mounting excitement or just dip into for an intellectual wallow. In either case, you will derive pleasure as well as instruction, no matter what social class you belong to.

Judgment on a Jail Culture

H. Bruce Franklin

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT
IN AMERICA
By Elliott Currie
Holt/Metropolitan. 230pp. $23

THIS IS a very unfashionable book. Elliott Currie does not believe that we need to build more and more prisons, impose longer sentences, make prisons as harsh as possible, eliminate educational opportunities for prisoners, reinstitute chain gangs, treat juvenile offenders as adults, and divert still more funds from social services to penal institutions. He clings to the old-fashioned notion that we should concentrate more on the prevention of crime. He even goes so far as to accept the hopelessly outdated idea that widespread poverty is the main cause of violent crime. If all this were not antiquated enough, Currie also evidently assumes that rational argument based on scientific knowledge — i.e. reason and facts — can change social policy. Even his prose style is anachronistic: earnest, free of jargon, lucid.

When Currie, who has taught sociology and criminology at Yale and Berkeley, advanced similar arguments in his 1985 volume Confronting Crime, the New York Times reviewer noted that the "biggest incarceration binge in American history" had increased the nation's prison population from fewer than 200,000 in 1970 to 454,000 by 1984. What may have seemed an astonishing number of inmates back in 1984 is dwarfed by the current prison population of 1.2 million, plus an additional half-a-million people in local jails.

The United States now has by far the largest prison system on the planet. There are more prisoners in California alone than in any other country in the world except China and Russia. The present U.S. rate of incarceration is six times the global average, seven times that of Europe, 14 times that of Japan, 23 times that of India. European rates of incarceration are consistently well below 100 per 100,000 population; the rate of incarceration of African-American males is close to 4,000 per 100,000. As Currie puts it in the present volume, "mass incarceration has been the most thoroughly implemented government social program of our time," and we have thus been conducting a gigantic social "experiment," "testing the degree to which a modern industrial society can maintain public order through the threat of punishment."

Has this experiment worked? Media attention has recently highlighted the falling rate of crime for the past four years. As Currie demonstrates, this decline has come during a period of unusually low unemployment and relative prosperity, actually bolstering his thesis that extreme poverty is the main cause of crime. Moreover, he notes that the crime rate has been falling only in relation to the extremely high levels of 1990-93. If we compare 1996 with 1984, the year cited in the review of Currie's earlier volume, we discover that the crime rate (according to the FBI's annual Crime Index) has actually risen 13 percent.

In the United States one in every 25 African-American males is in jail PHOTOGRAPH: GAMMA/SPOONERS

The costs of this social experiment are immense. As Currie points out, the money spent on prisons has been "taken from the parts of the public sector that educate, train, socialize, treat, nurture, and house the population — particularly the children of the poor." Currie if anything understates the consequences elsewhere in the public sector. For example, California now spends more on prisons than on higher education.

Crime And Punishment In America cogently debunks what Currie labels the "myths" that rationalize and legitimize the prison craze. The "myth of leniency" (the prevailing notion that criminals are being let off too easily or let out too soon) is shown to be based on phony statistics, "unless we believe that . . . everyone convicted of an offense — no matter how minor — should be sent to jail or prison, and that all of those sent to prison should stay there for the rest of their lives." The "myth" that "prison works" ignores the soaring crime rates during most of the quarter-century of the incarceration experiment; it also assumes that the only alternative available to us has been doing nothing at all about crime.

This leads to the parts of the book dearest to the author's heart: alternatives to mass incarceration. With thorough documentation from recent research, Currie describes a number of social programs that have indeed dramatically reduced rates of crime or recidivism, even among groups of people generally considered beyond hope. Examples he gives range from prenatal and preschool home visitation targeting child abuse through enriched schools for high-risk teenagers to successful community programs for youths who already have multiple arrests. The modest costs of these programs, together with their tangible benefits, offer a stark contrast to the enormously expensive mass incarceration model, with all its attendant social devastation.

This is a book that ought to be read by anyone concerned about crime and punishment in America, especially our political leaders and representatives.

Training for Business

In conjunction with The MBA Career Guide

Making the right choice

Want to study for an MBA but not sure which to go for? **Mario Lay** and **Nunzio Quacquarelli** assess the results of the international MBA recruiter survey

AT THE risk of stating the obvious, the fact is that all MBA courses are not the same. Recruiters have a preferred set of business schools from which they will actively select graduates. The international MBA recruiters survey conducted by the MBA Career Guide has, for the last six years, researched recruiter preferences to identify the international schools most utilised by international companies.

In 1997, 1,000 recruiters of MBAs from around the world were surveyed (44 per cent US/international corporations; 40 per cent European/international corporations; 8 per cent Asian/Australian corporations; 8 per cent Latin American corporations). The aim was to establish from which schools MBA graduates are most sought by international recruiters.

Each company was asked to list, in priority order, the international schools from which they had recently attempted to recruit international MBAs. Companies were also asked in which countries or regions they would be recruiting MBAs in 1998.

Only those companies active in two or more geographical regions have been incorporated in the results, accounting for approximately 250 distinct recruiting organisations from the more than 1,000 surveyed. The sample excludes companies recruiting purely for their domestic market. The score is weighted to take into account whether the school is mentioned first as a "top five" school, or as a "top 30" school. The more often a school appears highly-rated by a recruiter, the higher the score.

Schools that have consistently performed very well by this criterion include the Wharton School in North America and INSEAD in Fontainebleau, which again top the United States and European regions for 1997. In Asia-Pacific, Melbourne Business School and AGSM have vied for top spot, with Melbourne edging into first place.

The survey has also collected a further 20 measures of business-school excellence by which candidates and recruiters can judge the most suitable MBA programmes. One criterion that is important for international recruiters is the average years of work experience of candidates. An average of at least three years should be a benchmark for a top-flight MBA programme. The older the average age, the more executives are likely to be sharing their wisdom with the class.

Henley Management Centre in the UK tops this scale with an average of 10 years' experience among its class. Edinburgh Management School at eight years, and Strathclyde, Warwick and IMD at seven years are not far behind. US schools, in general, are younger in student profile, though the ADL School of Management has an average experience of 7.5 years. Increasingly, we see recruiters with different reasons for hiring, based on type as well as amount of experience. The global consulting practices of the big professional service companies such as Ernst & Young and Coopers & Lybrand insist on relevant prior experience, as well as an MBA. Other companies encourage career changers, but do look for "blue chip" experience and "demonstrated achievement" in candidates' previous careers.

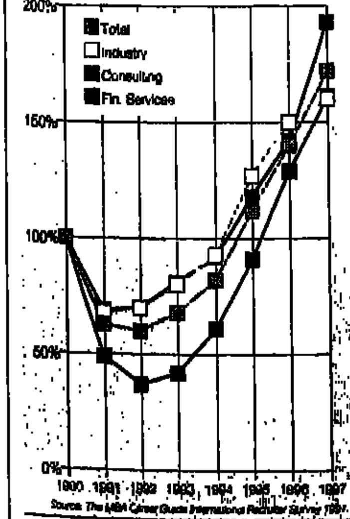
Companies have been actively recruiting from many more schools in 1997 than in previous years. As demand for MBAs has risen, a few schools have no longer been able to meet recruiter demand and so other schools have grown in popularity. This has created a virtuous circle because, with greater recruiter demand, these additional schools have seen an increase in the quantity and quality of MBA applicants. In Europe, Bocconi, Cranfield, IESE, Nijenrode, Rotterdam and Warwick have all done well.

In the US, Columbia, NYU, Amos Tuck and Darden on the East Coast, Michigan in the mid-West and UCLA, Irvine and Berkeley on the West Coast have all benefited from the spill-over effect as recruiters look beyond Wharton and Harvard, Chicago and Stanford in their respective regions. The research shows strong movement by recruiters away from heavily domestically-orientated programmes towards schools that have tried to build the international profile of their students, their faculty and course content. For example, among smaller schools, Bentley, Cornell, DePaul, Emory, Rochester and USC have all seen increased international recruiter activity in the past 12 months.

Asia-Pacific schools still lag behind their North American and European counterparts in facilities and reputation. Yet, with high percentages of international students, some schools have experienced growth in recruiter demand as companies seek to fill positions throughout the region from a few select schools.

Melbourne University topped the recruiter research preferences listing. Australian National University's Asia programme performed well, one of its characteristics being that 85 per cent of its students are international. National University of Singapore has 67 per cent international students with an average of over five-years' work experience. Nanyang University of Singapore has approximately 50 per cent foreign students and its average starting salary for graduating students is one of the highest in the region at $80,000. Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and the Chinese University of Hong Kong offer the primary full-time MBA programmes in the region, though serving a more regional marketplace for Greater China. Hence, average salaries are much lower at around $35,000.

Index of MBA recruitment by sector



Source: The MBA Career Guide International Recruiter Survey 1997.

The Recruiter Research is available free to subscribers of The MBA Career Guide.
Tel: + 44 171 383 4411
Email: recruit@career-guide.com
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Nunzio Quacquarelli, MBA Wharton, is editor of The MBA Career Guide International, published in the US, Europe and Asia twice annually

Centres of excellence that can put you on course for success

● Full-time MBA programmes which feature in the 1997/98 recruiter research (listed in alphabetical order, based on The MBA Career Guide's International MBA Recruiter Survey):

USA: Arthur D Little School of Management; Babson Graduate School of Business; Baruch College; Bentley Graduate School of Business; Bryant College; Boston University; Carnegie Mellon School of Ind. Admin.; Columbia University; Cornell University; Dartmouth College — Amos Tuck; DePaul University; Duke University — Fuqua; Emory University — Goizueta; Georgetown University; Harvard Business School; Indiana University; Maryland University; Michigan University; MIT — Sloan; New York University — Stern; Northwestern University — Kellogg; Purdue University; Southern Methodist University; Stanford University; Temple University; Thunderbird — AGSIM; University of California at Berkeley; University of California — Irvine; University of California — Los Angeles; University of Chicago; University of Denver; University of Illinois; University of Pennsylvania — Wharton; University of Pittsburgh; University of Rochester; University of South Carolina; University of Texas — Austin; University of Virginia — Darden; University of Washington — Olin; University of Wisconsin — Madison.

Europe: Aston University; Bath University; Bristol University; Cambridge University; Cardiff University; CESMA ESC Lyon; City University; Cranfield University; Durham University; Edinburgh University; EAP; ENPC; ESADE; Henley Management School; IESE; IMD; Imperial; INSEAD; Instituto de Empresa; ISA at HEC; Koblenz; KU Leuven; Lancaster University; Leicester University; London Business School; Loughborough University; LUISS — Rome; Manchester Business School; MBA SciencesPo; Nijenrode; Nimbas; Norwegian School of Management; Nottingham Business School; Rotterdam School of Management; SDA Bocconi; Solvay Business School; Southampton University; Strathclyde Graduate School of Business; Warwick University; WHU Wien.

Asia-Pacific: AGSM, University of NSW; Asian Institute of Management; Australian National University; Bond University; Chinese University of Hong Kong; Hong Kong University of S&T; Indian Institute (Ahmedabad); Indian Institute (Bangalore); Indian Institute (Calcutta); International University of Japan; Keio University; Macquarie University; Melbourne University; Monash University; Nanyang University, Singapore; National University of Singapore; Sasin Graduate School of Mgt.; University of Otago; University of Queensland; University of South Australia.

The research does not cover part-time and distance-learning MBA programmes. See the MBA Career Guide for further information.

www.topmba.com

MBAs wishing to work in banking/finance, consulting and business development should contact Mike Holmes at the Alumni Career Service at the web site above. Students can gain access to:
- Extracts from The MBA Career Guide, past and present;
- Alumni Career Service job listings for MBAs from around the world, updated every month;
- Profiles of more than 100 recruiting companies;
- Candidates can enter their CV and select companies of interest, on-line.



Sticking to your own agenda

SELF-MANAGED learning is a process that allows participants to determine what they want to learn and how they want to learn it.

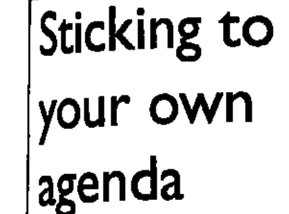
Roffey Park Management Institute was established in 1946 as an independent educational charity. It provides management development and training services for a wide variety of organisations, including a unique MBA, delivered via self-managed learning.

It is particularly effective for those wishing to align organisational objectives with their own development

As part of the self-managed learning process, managers work with others in a small group or "learning set". The other students will all be experienced executives, so participants get the chance to offer help and advice to each other on their projects. By doing this, all individual MBAs get involved with a range of organisations, which is enormously useful.

Each learning set provides a safe environment for managers to test out different techniques and approaches. They can also get invaluable input from their set on how to overcome any specific problems or issues at work.

For further information, write to: Roffey Park, Forest Road, West Sussex RH12 4TD; or telephone: 01293-851644.



Self-possessed . . . MBA students at the Roffey Park Management Institute in southern England decide what they want to learn and how they want to learn it

MBAs — worth the investment?

Nunzio Quacquarelli looks at the costs and the benefits of embarking on a full-time MBA

NATHALIE ROSS completed an MBA at INSEAD in 1993, having been a systems consultant. She wanted a complete change in career direction, and after her MBA she joined the leading international management consultancy, Arthur D Little. She is now a senior manager in their London office, specialising in travel and tourism, her field of interest.

Ms Ross's decision to undertake a full-time MBA has worked out well; she believes that for someone with a good academic background, at least three years' work experience and an interest in international business and culture, a top-flight, full-time MBA could be the best investment decision of a lifetime.

Anyone choosing to study at a top one-year MBA programme, such as those offered by Cranfield, IMD, INSEAD or Warwick business schools, should be aware that it will cost between \$20,000 and \$26,000 in course fees. In addition, there are living expenses of about \$13,000. Books, travel and sundries add another \$3,500. Missing out on a pre-MBA salary of, say, \$50,000, results in an opportunity cost of around \$90,000.

So what can a typical candidate expect in return? Aged 28 on graduation, they are likely to get a signing-on bonus of \$16,000 and a salary of \$80,000 or more. Looking into the future, should this new salary increase at 10 per cent per annum, and assuming the previous salary would also have increased by the same amount, they will have paid back the MBA and recouped lost salary in just three years. After 10 years, that MBA investment would have generated a positive net present value of approximately \$165,000.

Paul Geroski, dean of the two-year, full-time MBA at the London Business School says: "We have no hard figures for the payback of an MBA, because we simply do not collect the salary data for our alumni. But, my guess is that almost all our alumni payback their MBA within five years."

Most schools in the United States offer two-year programmes. With typical course fees of \$23,000 per annum, the payback for the average MBA would be six years.

Young professionals around the world have worked out the numbers for themselves and are applying to top two-year programmes in ever increasing numbers. The Wharton School in Philadelphia receives more than 40,000 inquiries and more than 10 applications for each of its 750 MBA places every year. Harvard Business School receives even more applications. Geroski believes that people are making sound investment decisions. He advises people to look not just at the costs, but to consider the quality of learning, the career flexibility that an MBA can offer and the lifetime alumni network.

Quality of learning is certainly the argument put forward by John Arnold, director of the MBA programme at Manchester. "By mirroring the reality of the business world on our MBA programme, students are exposed to more problems and opportunities in 18 months than they may encounter in the rest of their working career." His aim is to produce students who can "hit the ground running".

Colin New, chairman of Cranfield School of Management, also heads the European Case-Clearing House, which distributes management case study material to business schools. He believes the case method of instruction is a vital part of the value of a full-time MBA. Case-study teaching, apart from the problem-solving and technical skills fostered, also encourages teamwork and appreciation of the cultural diversity of colleagues. That is why the full-time MBA is so good at developing internationally-minded managers and consultants, who will be sensitive to client or employee needs in whichever country they are working.

Many people view the MBA as a catalyst for radical career change, as an entry point into such disciplines as business development, strategic planning, corporate finance, fund management and management consultancy.

Corinna Bosmann had worked in marketing, but after taking an MBA at Nottingham she found a job in the planning department at Daimler-Benz in Stuttgart. Typically, more than 30 per cent of MBA graduates enter industrial management and, as The MBA Career Guide reports, many more such companies are recruiting MBAs into development/strategist roles in 1998.

More than 25 per cent of MBAs graduating from European schools such as Bocconi, IESE, IMD, Nijenrode and Rotterdam become management consultants. Companies such as Andersen Consulting, Arthur D Little, Bain, Mercer and McKinsey all treat the MBA as the major entry qualification for their profession. Dermot McMeekin, a managing director at Andersen Consulting Strategic Services says: "A good MBA is important because we find that the skills acquired are directly relevant to the work we do."

THE MBA Career Guide's annual recruiter research finds that international awareness, interpersonal and analytical skills continue to be most sought after by employers. A further 20 per cent of MBAs enter financial services, with the balance taking on a wide variety of marketing, entrepreneurial and public sector roles.

Taking an MBA is one of the major personal investments in an individual's lifetime, but, like buying a house, there are locations that are more desirable than others and certain types of MBA that are more affordable, or suitable.

Careful analysis of each school and its programmes and of the individual's personal objectives, are required in making a decision about which MBA faculty to attend. The first thing to do when considering business school is to narrow down the type of career you might like to pursue, balanced by a realistic self-assessment of your abilities and skills. Examine your motives carefully. Determining where you want to work after your studies should be a major part of this process.

Why ask these questions first? For entirely practical reasons: most application forms ask for your career aspirations and want to see a clear, cogent explanation of where you want to be in the future and why that business school can help you get there. If you have only a reasonable academic background, no language proficiency and little or no work experience, it is questionable whether you would gain entry to a top international school or the consulting or banking professions they feed.

If you are not prepared to forgo employment, but simply want to increase your understanding of management tools, then you should consider part-time, executive or distance-learning study. Part-time study restricts you to schools in the vicinity of your current employer. If you have a reputable school nearby, then it is certainly a cost-efficient option — ranging from \$6,500 to \$33,000 over two to three years. But you must be prepared to accept what can sometimes be a gruelling schedule — to keep pace with studies and work. It is important that your employer is supportive.

Distance-learning study is also a serious alternative. More than 18,000 people are now using distance learning for an MBA or similar diploma with British institutions, compared with fewer than 4,000 a decade ago. Average costs for distance learning vary from \$6,000 to \$16,000 spread over two to eight years. Within the distance-learning arena, the business schools most often referenced in The MBA Career Guide's international recruiter research are Aston, Durham, Henley, Heriot-Watt, Institute for Financial Management, Kingston, Leicester, Open University BS, Strathclyde and Warwick.

Splendid isolation

Suzanne Alexander meets the distance learners keeping in touch via their computers

A LOT has been said about the isolation that characterises studying for the MBA by distance learning — but it doesn't have to be that way. Through our e-mail distribution lists, students of the Warwick Distance Learning MBA programme worldwide are able to exchange news and views. Some students have also used e-mail to set up "virtual" study groups.

Imagine a study group that arranges all its meetings to fit in with your own chaotic schedule. Add to that the valuable experience and insights from three continents, and you have some idea of the advantages of participating in a "virtual" study group. One successful group, with members in Malta, Singapore, Dubai and Zimbabwe, sum up some of the benefits of distance learning: "It's real on friendship, shared ideas and moral support."

"It's virtual! — no fixed meeting time or place. We can e-mail notes to each other almost instantly."

"I can mail a question to the group at midnight from the middle of the African bush and when I wake up I find it was answered in the Far East four hours before I asked the question."

"It provides exposure to other students' and tutors' advice and views, and creates a feeling of being included in a group rather than an island in the MBA 'sea of study'."

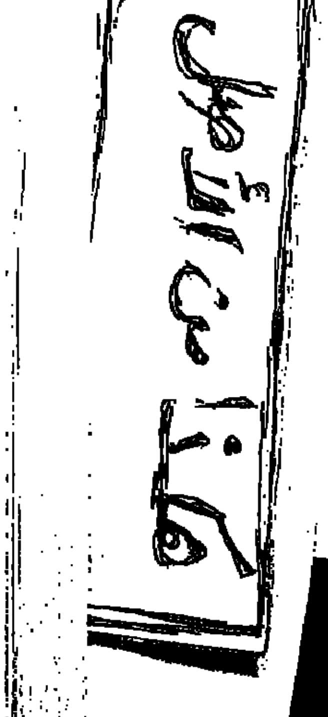
"You can always turn off the computer!"

Suzanne Alexander is administrative director of Warwick Business School Distance Learning MBA

www.career-guide.com

Euro-MBA Tour 1998:
Meet up to 100 leading international business schools at any of five European locations in October 1998: London, October 7; Paris, October 10; Amsterdam, October 12; Munich, October 15; Madrid, October 17.
Attendance is free for all candidates who pre-register. To pre-register, visit the Professional Careers Group website: www.career-guide.com or send your address and career details by mail, indicating which location you wish to attend to: Euro-MBA Tour '98, Top Career Forums, 32-34 Arlington Road, London NW1 7HU. The Euro-MBA Tour is jointly organised by The MBA Career Guide and Kaplan ECS.

The MBA Career Guide is available by subscription at £17.95 per edition or £32.95 annually, including postage/packing. Call +44 171 383 4411 or fax +44 171 383 4949 with your credit card details (Visa/Mastercard only). Also available via Internet/Email: http://www.career-guide.com and email; recruit@career-guide.com or by mail with cheque (£/\$) to: The MBA Career Guide, 32-34 Arlington Road, London NW1 7HU





Net gain? Business students at the Cranfield School of Management PHOTO: DAVID SILLITOE

Enrol for the revolution

How can MBAs embrace electronic commerce? **Lehar Zaidi** reports

THE growing presence of the Internet has posed a challenge for MBAs: where do they fit in to electronic commerce?

In a recent article in The MBA Career Guide, Conor Kehoe, principal from McKinsey & Co, asserts that blending technology and business is the key task facing MBAs. Clear opportunities are available in the media, retailing and financial services. The challenge is to keep pace with change and ensure skills and knowledge remain fresh.

The marriage of MBAs and information technology is not new. The very existence of the present information technology industry was built upon the contribution of MBA students. It goes back to California's Santa Clara county in the 1950s, when the invention of the silicon-based semiconductor gave the area its name and identity as Silicon Valley. Here, the idea of venture capital was born when Arthur Rock, a Harvard MBA graduate from 1951, funded the invention of the silicon chip. Rock backed many of the companies that make the Valley what it is today: Intel, Apple computers, Teledyne, Scientific Data Systems, General Transistor and Diasonics, to name a few.

The examples of MBA graduates linked to IT growth and, subsequently, the Internet are endless. Among them Scott Cook (Harvard MBA 1976), who founded the world's most popular financial software, Quicken. Michael Bloomberg's success story has become almost legendary; an MBA from Medford, Massachusetts, he became a partner at blue-chip financial services firm, Salomon Brothers. Bloomberg left them 16 years later to set up his own firm, quickly outpacing competitors to become the world's fastest growing financial information provider.

It was in the Valley that microcomputer and software development evolved into that of Internet-based technologies. Following the lead of their predecessors such as Apple and Oracle, Valley start-ups such as Sun Microsystems, Netscape, Yahoo! and Adobe have changed the way the world thinks, plays, communicates and does business.

Shikhar Ghosh, who graduated as an MBA in 1980, set up his Cambridge, Massachusetts-based electronic commerce company, Open Market, developing software to handle companies' Internet commerce with airtight security. Ghosh founded the company with David Gifford, an MIT professor in 1994, making it a veritable old-time establishment in Internet terms. Now publicly-traded on Wall Street, Open Market is valued at $480 million and employs 300 people.

It is clear that much of the progress of the Internet and the IT explosion is linked to the entrepreneurial, venture capitalist profile of the MBA alumni. The roots lie not only in the trend for students joining hi-tech firms and entering the Internet arena, but also in the fact that the creation of the firms themselves is inextricably linked with the "typical" MBA entrepreneurial spirit.

The distinctive nature of Silicon Valley ventures and the lessons they hold for businesses have inspired Harvard Business School to establish its own research centre. Last summer, the school's California Research Centre (CRC) opened its doors in Menlo Park at 3,000 Sand Hill Road, an address at the hub of the venture-capital community.

"Silicon Valley is one of the world's best research sites," says Harvard professor and senior associate dean William A Sahlman, who has been instrumental in setting up the centre. Mr Sahlman identified four characteristics that make the area unique: the rapid pace of change, a highly-evolved infrastructure, a culture of entrepreneurship and extraordinary efforts by and rewards for employees. "Our knowledge of the Valley region has enabled us to develop a deep understanding of business practices that cut across functional boundaries, from finance to human-resource management, to strategy," he says.

Awareness of the Valley's importance amongst students has increased, too. Veteran Valleyite Christina Darwall, noting that fewer than 20 members of her MBA class of 1975 moved to California upon graduation, points out that, since then, there has been an explosion of interest in the West Coast. More than 100 members of the class of 1997 (13 per cent) are now working in San Francisco's Bay Area.

The global management community has not been oblivious to the development. The Harvard Business School held its annual conference, Cyberposium '98, last month to examine how new technologies affect the business landscape. More than 1,000 MBAs and business leaders from around the world attended, including London Business School, MIT, Wharton, Columbia, NYU, Tuck, Stanford, Berkeley, Kellogg, UT Austin, INSEAD and others.

Jill Schaeffer, Harvard MBA 1998 and Cyberposium co-chair, said: "With the Cyberposium theme of 'The Net Effect', the conference focused on exploring and challenging the evolving Internet and high-technology business models."

Cyberposium '98's executive team, in partnership with blue-chip companies in New York, launched a real-time conference website that was the hub of the event's virtual community. MBA students participated in live, on-line discussions and watched panel sessions on the Internet using video-streaming technology.

Cyberposium '98 used new business processes and practices in the operation and organisation of the conference as well as more traditional keynote speakers, panel discussions, product demonstrations, entrepreneurial workshops and a career fair with more than 100 companies.

Corporate participation in Cyberposium is key to the conference's success. "By attracting executives from both technology-based and traditional firms, as well as interested MBAs, Cyberposium '98 reinforced the conference's role as a forum for the ongoing debate about the implications and opportunities resulting

continued on page 5

Eddy Travia and **Pim Paffen** on specialised MBAs

Best of both worlds

IN RECENT years we have seen the rapid growth of "systems integrators", consultants involved in developing business and IT strategies for clients, and who will then oversee the development and implementation of systems solutions to meet that company's needs.

MBAs with technical expertise are in demand in this area because they add the business perspective to the technological perspective. By identifying business benefits they are effectively serving as interpreters and translators of technically-focused elements.

They can ask the question: What can this technology do for the business?, as opposed to the more technically focused view: What can this technology do?

MBAs can help to recognise the costs and limitations of the technology, as well as the benefits, leading to enhanced decision-making.

They can also recognise potential challenges to the way things are done or will be done in the organisation. A working climate and culture may be drastically changed with the implementation of new technology; knowing this in advance, and allowing for preparation, will increase the probability of success.

The MBAs offered by the Theseus Business School, near Nice, offer skills in leadership with regard to innovation, strategy, information and technology. Theseus MBA graduates have extensive experience in some forms of technology and a desire to integrate business and technology in an innovative and meaningful way to accomplish particular goals.

In technological industries, a large number of general management positions are held by engineers. In industrialised countries such as Japan and Germany, there are more engineers in top management positions than non-engineers, and the demand is rising.

With their professional background and experience, engineers know how to handle the technological processes in the company. When they enter general management, however, they are often shown to lack knowledge, skills and experience appropriate for the job.

The MBA for engineers aims to fill that gap by giving them the opportunity to apply a multidisciplinary approach.

At TSM Twente Business School, managerial disciplines are taught, including finance, organisational design, strategic management, human resources management, international management, consumer and business-to-business marketing. The programme also contains specific elements focused on engineers.

Continued from page 4

from technology changes," said Cyberposium marketing director, Allison Mnookin. Entrepreneurially oriented MBAs are encouraged and offered guidance to start firms in the area of Internet commerce.

In the UK there is growing awareness of the need to tie Internet issues with business objectives. Pentacom, a London-based Internet and intranet business consultancy is bridging the gap between consultancy and technology services. At the recent MBA Recruiters Forum in London, organised by The MBA Career Guide, which attracted students from leading schools such as Wharton, INSEAD, Rotterdam, London Business School, Cranfield and Warwick, the consultancy noted a high level of interest in technology and Internet solutions.

What is significant is the number of MBAs who have taken the initiative and founded Internet-based companies. Take Gregory Slayton; he graduated as an MBA in 1990 and while working at McKinsey and Co, co-founded its multimedia practice group. He then co-founded Worlds Inc, an Internet software company, after raising $17 million in venture capital — in no small measure due to his MBA insight.

Although it is difficult for MBAs to get a foothold in established blue-chip firms, they are at an advantage if they can do so, because of the greater opportunities to develop and enhance their strategic and business consulting skills.

Most business schools are now running special programmes oriented toward the Internet. For example, The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, has designed a module that focuses on electronic commerce. The course, Marketing and Electronic Commerce, is designed to apply the principles of marketing to computer-mediated environments and to understand how these marketing principles will have to adapt. Wharton is also organising a forum that aims to, "chart the future of electronic commerce", bringing together MBAs, executives and faculty experts who are leaders in the study of the emerging electronic marketplace.

The future for MBAs who can contribute to the electronic marketplace is promising. By bringing the MBA entrepreneurial spirit to the development of new technologies and business and offering strategic insight and consultancy services to companies, the MBA graduate will find themselves in increasing demand.

Harvard Business School: www.alumni.hbs.edu/bulletin/1997/.
Columbia Business School: www.Columbia.edu/cu/business/:
Management Consulting Institute: www mcni com/;
The Wharton School: www.marketing.wharton.upennn.edu/

Lehar Zaidi is a postgraduate biochemical engineer; she is a consultant specialising in business applications for Internet technology

Technology update

● **THE new class of Cranfield MBAs will have access to intranet technology from PCs placed in social areas. An on-going, on-line Cadbury Schweppes case study will run throughout the MBA programme.**

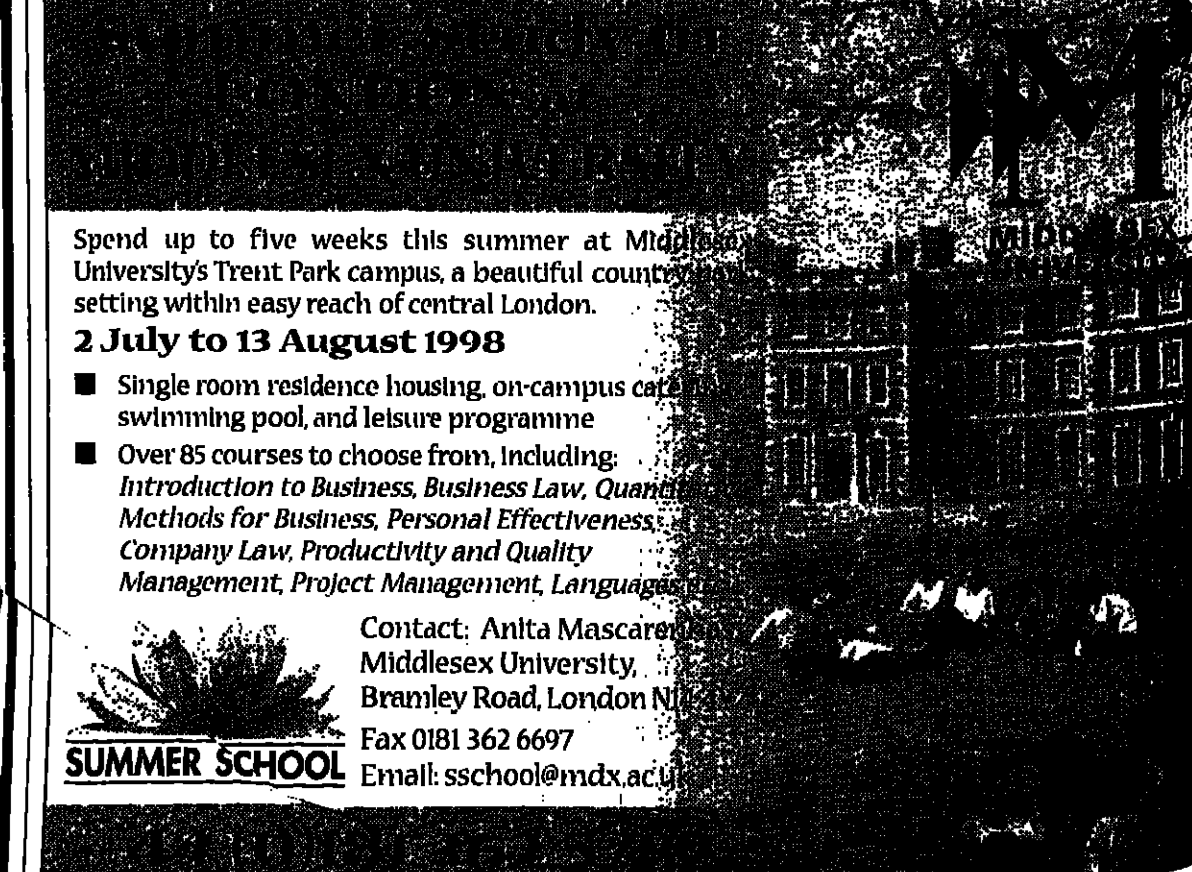
● **OPEN University has launched on-line tutorials. More than 5,000 MBA students are using its fully interactive on-line conferencing system and multimedia applications to enhance their learning, wherever they are.**

● **IESE and MIT have combined faculty to provide an elective on the role of information technology in corporate strategy.**

● **CITY University has a new MBA track for Management of Technology. The new course is taught in partnership with ICI, Zeneca, Ernst & Young and BP.**

● **EUROPEAN Institute of Purchasing Management has developed an MBA designed to combine business skills with training in purchasing. It involves treating purchasing as a technology-monitoring centre, working with the R&D department. By influencing the design stage of the product, this can result in 10-fold savings compared with classic purchasing methods.**





In step with the Latin beat

Adrian Barrett on the growing interest in Latin American MBAs

LATIN Americans are entering business schools around the world in growing numbers, and both local and Western companies are beginning to seek MBAs more actively than in the past.

It's not hard to see why. According to Paulo Ferraz Pereira, president of Banco Bozano, "the trend is one of healthy growth for Latin American economies, justifying growing investment in the region". Local stock markets performed well in 1997 and corporate earnings have been growing steadily.

Diego Alcazar, director of MBAs at Instituto De Empresa says: "About 4,000 Latin Americans go to study an MBA overseas." Up to 10 per cent of these students choose to study in Spain to create a bridge into Europe and vice-versa.

The banking sector has been the main catalyst for transferring MBAs from Europe to Latin America. Not surprisingly, given the predominance of the Spanish language in the region, it is the peninsular companies and schools that have benefited most from this trend. Banco Bilbao Vizcaya (BBV) has led massive investment programmes throughout Latin America as they sought to diversify away from the low margins of the domestic Spanish market.

In 1992, BBV was a struggling Spanish bank losing market share and money. Pedro Uriate, its chief executive, led an investment programme, buying banks in Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Uruguay, Venezuela and even in Portuguese-speaking Brazil. Today BBV is the fourth largest bank in Latin America, having created more than $5 billion in shareholder value.

MBAs have played a central role in this transformation process. BBV is one of the largest banking recruiters from Spanish schools and has posted MBA students in most of its Latin American operations. Banco Santander has followed a similarly successful investment strategy into Latin America and, more recently, HSBC Group has begun to invest in the region, coinciding with the development of a significant MBA recruiting programme.

The growth of Latin American economies is creating MBA opportunities in many sectors, — not only in banking. Mariano Dall'Orso is a Latin American who completed his MBA at the London Business School in 1996 and joined Lucent Technologies as marketing manager for Latin America.

With the liberalisation of telecommunications worldwide in 1998, there is an opening up of many Latin American markets to competition, often for the first time. This is creating growth in demand for network producers such as Lucent. It is also creating a stimulus for cellular operators seeking low-cost entry strategies for these regions. MBAs with some technical background are seen as ideal candidates to assist in business development.

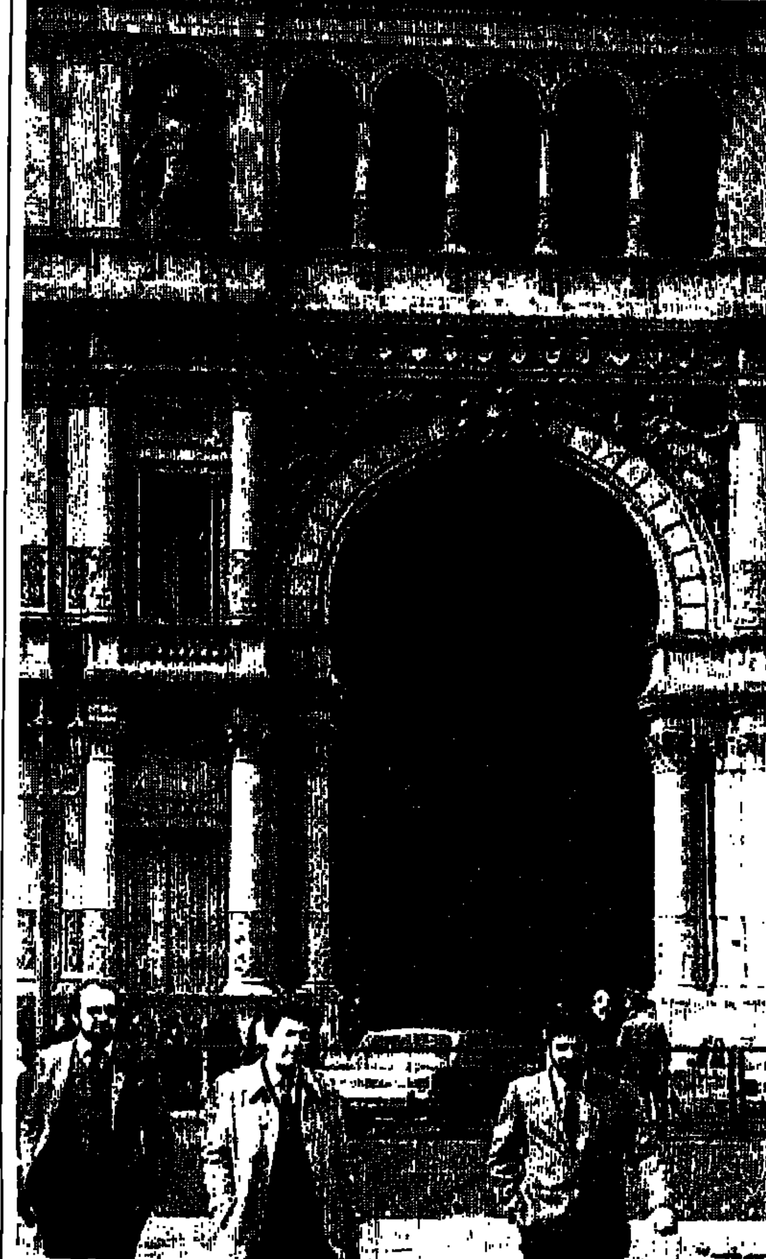
Within consumer electronics, the Korean multinational Samsung is actively recruiting MBAs for Mexico, Brazil and Argentina as part of its global strategist programme. General Electric has a similar programme for the region.

Business schools in Latin America are relatively new and unknown in the international arena. Currently, it is the top Spanish and United States schools that are helping to develop and train staff and to establish a certain quality of management education in the region. ESADE in Barcelona has a long-standing association with Latin America and has Chilean, Mexican, Cuban and Argentine professors in its faculty. Latin American students tend to account for about 15 per cent of its class each year.

IESE, also based in Barcelona, has been similarly progressive, through the establishment of a network of business schools in Latin America, in countries where, previously, management education had hardly existed. Several of the better-known schools in Latin America are part of this group, including IPADE in Mexico, IAE in Argentina, INALDE in Colombia and IEEM in Uruguay.

Candidates interested in Latin America and US-based opportunities should send their CVs to Jack Roche at the ACS US office at 3601 Locust Walk, Philadelphia, PA 19104. Applicants may register details on the ACS/Professional Careers Group Internet Site: www.career-guide.com

Adrian Barrett is director of ACS Recruitment



A growing number of MBAs are being recruited to work in Latin American countries such as Argentina PHOTO: ROBIN LAURANCE

Preparing for the big picture

Business schools are tailoring their courses towards the global economy. **Nunzio Quacquarelli** reports

A MOMENTUM towards the globalisation of business has had the effect of stimulating demand for MBAs. In research conducted annually by The MBA Career Guide, we see that demand for top-tier MBAs has doubled since 1994, and in most regions of the world this trend is expected to continue.

Clearly, improved communications have been a necessary technological development to enable companies to operate on a global scale. Economic prosperity has also made emerging markets attractive. But what has really made a difference in the last few years has been the removal of trade barriers. The influence of Gatt, regional economic unions and industry-wide agreements like the liberalisation of the global telecommunications industry, have all contributed to companies accelerating global expansion plans.

Hugh Small, head of AT Kearney's Global Telecoms practice, says: "As a result of liberalisation, we see the emergence of various new players within the telecoms industry. Each new entrant will require the advice of a consultant, often on a market-by-market basis, ensuring huge demand for consultancy services."

Business schools have responded by internationalising their MBA programmes to meet recruiter demand. The Wharton School in Pennsylvania changed their programme in 1991 to reflect the demands of international business, by integrating business functions within each course, to incorporate an international perspective. Stephen Kobrin, director of the Lauder Institute at Wharton, says: "We believe an internationalised MBA programme is a basic, entry-level requirement for all our MBA candidates who will have to function effectively in the global economy."

Berkeley, Columbia, Darden, Emory, MIT, South Carolina, Thunderbird, UCLA and UC-Irvine business schools have also begun to develop international programmes. Chicago has gone one step further and set up an Executive MBA Centre in Barcelona, partly to ensure their faculty has regular exposure to the European region.

European schools have taken the initiative in developing internationally orientated student faculties. In the UK, Bristol and Durham business schools have the smallest number of domestic students, both having 90 per cent overseas candidates in 1997. On the Continent, IMD in Lausanne has only 4 per cent Swiss students while Rotterdam has only 10 per cent Dutch students. IESE in Barcelona has, since 1989, run an MBA for Development as an optional part of their two-year MBA, sending students to work for non-governmental organisations in Latin America, Africa and Asia.

Manchester Business School, as part of its full-time MBA programme, is developing an Asia-Pacific stream that will allow students to specialise in the theory and practice of East Asian business for up to 40 per cent of their degree requirements.

The pace to internationalise is accelerating, and English as the language of study is the common thread. For example, LUISS in Rome and Instituto De Empresa in Madrid have both moved from dual-language to English language MBAs, offering scholarships to encourage international students.

> **The removal of trade barriers has made a big difference in allowing firms to operate globally**

Asia-Pacific schools are much less developed than their Western counterparts, but a few select schools are establishing themselves among international recruiters. Melbourne University achieves average starting salaries of $140,500 for its MBAs, attracting international recruiters such as McKinsey.

Nanyang University of Singapore has approximately 50 per cent foreign students and an average starting salary for graduating students of $80,000, which compares well with many United States and European schools. Many recruiters select Singapore for their Asian headquarters. Choo Teck Min, director of Nanyang, observes a growing demand for schools with a global outlook, "because of the greater importance of global rather than regional markets for the major economies in the Asia-Pacific region". Other emerging schools include AGSM in Sydney, Hong Kong University of Science & Technology and The Indian Institutes.

The jury is still out on how far the economic crisis in Asia will affect recruitment. In the early 1990s, demand for staff fell away during a global recession. There is some danger that financial collapses in Japan or Hong Kong could lead to a world recession which would slow both MBA recruiter demand and the flow of candidates — but there is no evidence of this yet.

Robin Edwards of the Australian Graduate School of Management says: "There is speculation that the expatriate market will remain strong. However, entry level positions in local companies will be affected."

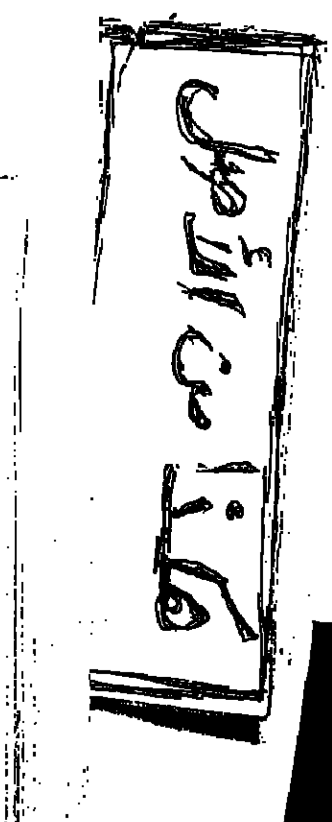
Back in Europe, Paul Geroski, dean of the full-time MBA at London Business School says: "We will see fewer sponsored students from Asia on our MBA programme, but we will simply find candidates from other regions of the world."

Many commentators remain extremely bullish. Mike MacGaughey has been a consultant working in the Asia-Pacific region for more than 25 years. He is currently managing director of Arthur D Little Asia-Pacific. According to Mr MacGaughey, "Foreign multinationals will not, on the whole, be significantly impacted. We see certain sectors, like luxury goods, being hit very hard in markets in Thailand, Malaysia and Japan.

"Many other sectors will experience a short-term downturn in sales. But, in general, Western companies have taken a long-term view. There may be some re-evaluation of which markets should provide the focus of their efforts. Some local companies will now look very cheap and I suspect we shall see a surge in acquisitions activity."

Given that most MBAs work for foreign multinationals investing in Asia, acquisitive activity could lead to a further dramatic increase in demand for MBAs to work in the Asia region.

Both ABN AMRO Bank and Citibank treat the MBA as their core entry-level qualification for Asia and both anticipate growing demand in 1998. Dr André Everett of Otago Business School in New Zealand says: "In the Asia-Pacific region, now is the time to 'buy' good MBA recipients."



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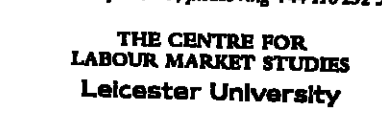
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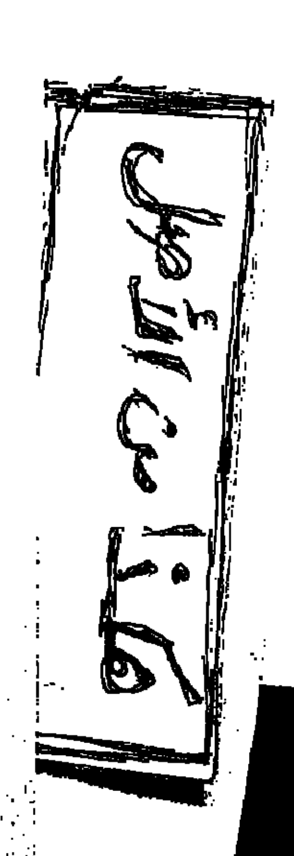
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Expats mobilise to fight Halifax for shares

Alex Bellos in Rio de Janeiro

A LIVERPUDLIAN in Brazil is leading a worldwide campaign against the Halifax, Britain's biggest mortgage lender, in one of the first cases of expatriates teaming up to fight a court action in the UK.

Brian Hazlehurst spends 14 hours a day in his flat in Rio de Janeiro, co-ordinating the campaign against the exclusion from free shares when the society was floated on the stock market last year.

The campaign now has branches in 29 countries, including the United States, Papua New Guinea, China, Poland, Fiji, Mali, Bermuda and Brunei.

Mr Hazlehurst, aged 49, was one of almost 100,000 expatriates excluded by the Halifax from receiving an average of $4,000 in shares. He moved to Brazil 19 years ago after living in Ethiopia, where he was held hostage in 1976 for five months by the Eritrean Liberation Front.

He put $37,000 in the Halifax about six years ago, which means he would have been eligible for about $16,000 when it demutualised. But the Halifax decided to exclude investors living in countries where it found it "onerous" to comply with securities laws or where it considered there was an "immaterial" number of investors — fewer than 1,000.

Using the Internet, Mr Hazlehurst, a freelance translator, started a United Halifax Victims (Unhavs) website and within months managed to discover several hundred expatriates in similar situations.

Under the slogan, "All Unhavs shall be havs", he is raising money from members to pay for a barrister.

Unhav's lawyer, Jeffrey Goldberg, from Leeds, has instructed a London barrister. Mr Goldberg is an expert in company litigation and a judge on the northern circuit. If the counsel says that Mr Hazlehurst has grounds, he will start a civil case against the Halifax. The assessment is expected this month.

Mr Hazlehurst said: "They must have thought that we wouldn't mobilise because we are dispersed all around the world. But with the Internet, it is cheap and fast."

Dennis Milner, a member of the St Albans branch, was told that he had been allocated 239 shares, according to his balance at November 1994. But when he did not receive a share certificate after the flotation, he contacted the Halifax helpline to be told that he had not qualified because he had notified them some months before that he was moving to a temporary address in Holland, where he was on government secondment.

"I am absolutely incredulous," he said. "What was even worse was the totally rude, dismissive, arrogant manner in which my subsequent correspondence was dealt with."

Almost 8 million people were included in the $30 billion flotation. Those excluded could have used addresses in one of the 27 "permitted" countries, but many say they were not told or were told too late.

The Halifax also excluded about 240,000 others. Heirs of members who died between the conversion announcement and the flotation got the deceased members' full entitlement only if the heirs had been members for at least two years.

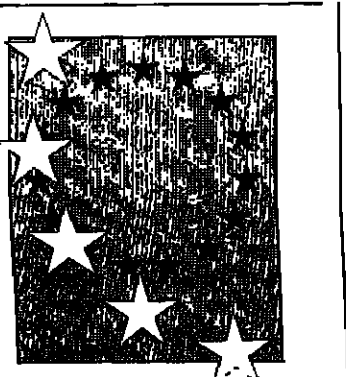
In 1996, the Woolwich, along with the Alliance & Leicester, faced widespread criticism when it emerged that thousands of severely disabled savers would not benefit fully from the share bonanza because their accounts were administered by carers.

The Unhavs' campaign, enlarged to take account of other categories, brings the potential total number to 314,000. "It is not just about the money any more, it is about the principle," Mr Hazlehurst said.

● The Halifax this week reported a 15 per cent rise in 1997 pre-tax profits to $2.7 billion.

The United Halifax Victims website is www.rain.org/~jmhmps/unhav.html

Eleven head for monetary union



Europe this week

Martin Walker

THE 15 members of the European Union formally presented their 1997 economic statistics last week to show that all of them except Greece had, by hook or by crook or by strenuous effort, managed to duck under the budget deficit threshold of 3 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP). This is the level required by the Maastricht treaty to join the new single currency. Germany and France did so by a whisker.

However, there are two other Maastricht criteria. And the one that says that state debt should be declining to 60 per cent of GDP was met only by Finland, France, Luxembourg and Britain. The final criterion, to get long-term interest rates into a low common band, has been achieved, thanks to the disciplines of the convergence process, by all 15 countries except Greece, Sweden and Britain, none of which will be joining the euro when it is launched. Denmark has also opted to stay out of the first wave.

It is thus almost certain that European monetary union will go ahead with 11 members, but with sufficient uncertainty over their various levels of debt to provide hostages to fortune. In expectation of this certainty, the European Commission hosted a public forum on the practicalities of the euro's launch at the Brussels stock exchange last week. It is now closer than even the reluctant British may think. British hotels, restaurants, petrol stations and transport companies were warned to be ready to accept credit card payments in Europe's new single currency from next January.

The Commission has left nothing to chance. One of the documents being circulated at the forum revealed plans for Europe's schoolchildren to be targeted for a propaganda campaign as "strong vectors of information on the euro" to help sell the new single currency to a sceptical public. Britain's Department for Education and its European equivalents have been advised to start preparing text books, maths lessons and teaching aides on the euro for the start of the next school year, and thus use children to help educate their parents.

The report of the group on "Psycho-Sociological Aspects of the Changeover to the Euro", one of a series of expert teams hired by the Commission to plan the launch of the currency, also recommends recruiting teachers, doctors, chemists and postmen, as well as TV personalities and opinion leaders to help launch the euro, even if they are sceptics.

"The fact of involving them in a process which most regard as a very great certainty may have a positive influence on their opinion," the report says.

Claiming that "it is necessary to combat the negative images generated by European unification", the psycho-sociologists recommend that the single currency should be marketed along lines that "mobilise ideas of peace, the cohesion of inter-European relations, democracy and a collective project".

The problem, the experts say, is that the euro is being launched as a financial project and used in bank transactions from next year, but will not become a public currency until 2002. The euro may get the reputation of being "the currency of the rich".

"Nothing would be more hazardous than to rely solely on the confidence of financial markets," the group warns. "It is becoming impossible to deal with the introduction of the euro on a purely practical and consensual basis, ignoring the political and cultural dimensions of the transition."

So in order to sell the single currency to the wider public it becomes "urgently necessary to produce public information policies which are very clearly distinct in content and form from professional communications on the euro, in particular those issued in financial circles". Special campaigns should be devised for the elderly, the semi-literate, the poor and those without bank accounts.

Experts from across Europe were recruited, including three from Exeter university's department of psychology. One of the team's key proposals was to establish a network of locally-based "observatories" across Europe, who will monitor the changeover and try to stop underhand price increases. They "must not be regarded as simple message-bearers of governments, which would totally undermine their credibility", the psychologists insist.

One example of the impact these psycho-sociologists have had on the Commission's marketing strategy emerged in the publication at last week's forum of the EU's new "Guide for Retailers". To illustrate how the euro will bring price transparency for widely-sold products, the guide cites the prices across Europe, in local currencies and in euros, for two popular consumer items. Ironically for a guide dedicated to the European project, the items are those classically American products: a bottle of Coca-Cola and a Big Mac hamburger, whose price ranges from E1.85 in Greece to E3.50 in Denmark.

Plans for a common tax regime across Europe, the logical next step after monetary union, were also being hammered out in Brussels last week, in talks between EU Commissioner Mario Monti and officials from all 15 EU finance ministries. Under pressure from business for cuts in taxes on cross-border operations, the tax policy group also faced a French demand for a minimum 25 per cent withholding tax on savings by EU nationals in offshore or foreign accounts.

This attack on offshore tax loopholes, along with a strong drive to harmonise corporate tax rates across Europe, brings into focus the contentious consequence of monetary union for a relatively low-tax country such as Britain. Government spending averages 48.5 per cent of GDP across the EU, with a peak in Sweden of 65 per cent. But Britain is at the bottom of the league table, with government spending taking only 41 per cent of GDP. The plan to harmonise EU taxes, while reducing the tax burden in Sweden, Denmark and Germany, would drive up tax rates in Britain.

The tax policy group has two main tasks. The first is to produce a draft directive that will establish a minimum effective tax rate on savings income across the EU, with potentially serious implications for tax havens such as Luxembourg and the Channel Islands. The second task is to draft a code of conduct for corporate taxation, to prevent low-tax countries "poaching" jobs and investment from others.

Ireland has already agreed to phase out its system under which companies can enjoy a tax rate as low as 10 per cent, a rate also available to foreign banks that invest in the highly successful new Customs House financial services centre in Dublin. Portugal's 15-year tax holiday for new financial services setting up in Madeira is under threat; and Belgium faces an end to its "co-ordination centre" under which multinationals which set up a Brussels HQ can enjoy a tax rate of a mere 5 per cent on profits from intra-group transactions.

Converging?

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Germany	2.7	61.3
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Spain	2.6	68.3
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Netherlands	1.6	72.0
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
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In Brief

TWO British insurance groups, Commercial U... and General Accident, have agreed a merger worth $25... lion. Savings of more than $369 million should flow ... the deal, but up to 5,000 ... could be lost.

BRITISH exporters are ... a bumpy ride this year ... Asian crisis and strong ... hamper the economy. A $5... lion shortfall on trade ... in the final three months of 1997 has reinforced City ...

NATWEST revealed a ... decline in annual prof... posting its worst perform... since 1993. The bank made $1.64 billion, down from $1.83 billion last year.

THE fibres and chemicals group Courtaulds announced 500 job losses in ... Midlands as a prelude to ... break-up of the group. On... Britain's oldest industrial names, it blames its poor ... partly on the Asian crisis.

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	Sterling rates March 2
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Austria	21.00-21.02
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Canada	2.3509-2.3530
Denmark	11.38-11.38
France	10.00-10.01
Germany	2.9858-2.9888
Hong Kong	12.75-12.76
Ireland	1.2020-1.2044
Italy	2,937-2,942
Japan	205.70-205.99
Netherlands	3.3652-3.3680
New Zealand	2.8042-2.8099
Norway	12.47-12.48
Portugal	305.72-306.06
Spain	252.93-253.29
Sweden	13.14-13.17
Switzerland	2.4100-2.4139
USA	1.6480-1.6490
ECU	1.5092-1.5107

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GUARDIAN WEEKLY
March 8 1998

No love lost between UN groups in Iraq

Afsané Bassir Pour in Baghdad

ON THE evening of February 23, the day the United Nations and Iraq signed a peace accord, there were as usual two distinct groups of customers at the bar of the Canal Hotel in Baghdad. One lot wore jeans, knocked back cans of beer, played darts and put on deafening disco music.

The other group wore ties, sipped gin-and-tonics, watched CNN news and tried to turn down the volume of the music.

The first group was made up of Unscom inspectors, whose job is to oversee the disarmament of Iraq, and the other consisted of monitors from the UN's Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA). The United Nations is split down the middle at its Baghdad headquarters in the Canal Hotel.

The peace agreement may result in co-operation between the Iraqi authorities and those in New York, but not between the UN groups in Baghdad. The mood in the bar was one of tension and gloom. "Don't you talk to each other?" I asked, surprised by the atmosphere. "We've got nothing to say to the 'cowboys'," said a monitor of the Oil for Food programme. "We're here to help the Iraqis. They came to humiliate them."

The "cowboys" were equally worked up. The disarmament experts regard the DHA monitors, whose job is to supervise the distribution of food to the civilian population, as nothing better than "bunny-huggers". Unscom inspectors have even had T-shirts printed which show a sign banning "bunny-huggers".

The "cowboys" treat the "bunny-huggers" condescendingly. The latter respond with disdain. The result is a surreal atmosphere, particularly as both groups share the same building. That evening the "bunny-huggers" scored a point by talking openly to a reporter. The "cowboys" are forbidden by their boss to talk to the press, and so had no way of defending themselves.

Members of a UN weapons inspection team in Iraq. Many disarmament experts regard the UN human rights monitors in Baghdad as nothing better than 'bunny-huggers'

To get both sides of the argument, I needed a neutral mediator. "Most of the weapons inspectors are soldiers who behave like soldiers," said a Western diplomat on speaking terms with both camps. "The monitors are aid workers. It would be unfair to say that all the inspectors are bad guys. You get a mixed bag."

But, according to another diplomat, "the aid monitors' deliberate strategy of setting themselves apart from Unscom doesn't help create a feeling of camaraderie either". Several months ago, the DHA monitors changed the plates on their white Toyotas to distinguish them from Unscom's.

"I take your point," said the first diplomat, "but Unscom inspectors deliberately provoke everyone. Remember the time they threw darts at a 250-dinar banknote with Saddam Hussein's picture on it, or the time they went around with an American flag sewn into their caps. But we shouldn't talk about divisions today: this is a historic moment."

How is this "historic" moment perceived by either side? After congratulating an Australian weapons inspector on his skill at darts, I ventured to ask him: "Have we witnessed the triumph of diplomacy?" "You just wait a week or two and you'll see if diplomacy has triumphed," he snapped. "You don't know these guys."

When asked the same question, a DHA monitor said: "If triumph there is, it's a triumph of the Iraqi population." Glaring over at the inspectors, he added: "But it also means that Unscom will stay on in Iraq."

He was waiting his turn to order a drink at the bar when a weapons inspector unceremoniously barged ahead of him. "You see how they treat us. Imagine what they're like with the Iraqis and then you'll understand the reasons for the crisis."

When asked about acrimony between the "two UNs", the co-ordinator of the humanitarian programme in Iraq, the Irish diplomat Denis Halliday, took a philosophical view: "It's all a question of respect. Kofi Annan [the UN secretary-general] realised that. If the monitors respect the inspectors, they in turn will be respected. If Unscom understands what we're here for, everything will work better." He added that the Iraqis found it very hard to fathom the divisions within UN ranks.

(February 26)

Drugs: still no end to the debate

EDITORIAL

THE use of drugs remains a taboo subject in France. Public debate on what attitude the law should take towards narcotics and the hundreds of thousands of people who use them has been hampered by the same ideological considerations and gut reactions for nearly 30 years.

The petition in the form of a confession signed on February 25 by 111 prominent personalities in the arts, who have thus laid themselves open to prosecution, is reminiscent of a similar manifesto signed in 1976.

The arguments on both sides remain the same: militants who favour an overhaul of the 1970 law call publicly for the right to use drugs; defenders of the ban accuse them of wishing to pervert society.

The left, deeply divided on the issue, has proved unable to hammer out a coherent approach. A preliminary report by the National Audit Office has come to the conclusion that the mishandling of funds earmarked for the fight against drug addiction was the result of an "inadequate definition of aims and priorities".

Debate on the degree to which punishment should be proportional to the offence and on the effectiveness of the 1970 law has been activated, reactivated, spotlighted and buried many times.

The admission by the health minister, Bernard Kouchner, that he favoured the therapeutic use of cannabis and heroin, further confused the issue.

The schools minister, Ségolène Royal, was quick to put the record straight when she argued that "there are no soft drugs", while the Communist minister of youth and sport, Marie-George Buffet, said she thought it "essential that society should establish a ban".

A number of objective contributions to the argument have been made over the past 20 years. Monique Pelletier's 1978 report put paid to the theory that there is an "escalation" from soft to hard drugs. Catherine Trautmann, in her 1989 report, described the distinction between legal and illegal drugs as "obsolete".

In November 1994, the National Ethics Committee ruled that the legal distinction between narcotic substances had "no coherent scientific basis". In December 1997, experts on drug addiction called for the decriminalisation of drug use.

Surprisingly, the only genuine attempt to tackle the problem had come earlier from the right, when Simone Veil, then minister of social affairs, health and cities, set up a commission chaired by Professor Roger Henrion.

In February 1995, the commission came out in favour, by a majority of one vote, of the experimental decriminalisation of cannabis. His report, like all those before it, was shelved.

(February 26)

Raging De Niro rails against France

Michel Braudeau

ON FEBRUARY 10, Robert De Niro was grilled for nine hours by Paris police about his possible connections with a high-class international call-girl ring. He has been fuming with rage ever since.

"I'll never come back to France," he told Le Monde in his suite at the Hôtel Bristol, where he has been staying since October while acting in Ronin, the film John Frankenheimer is currently shooting in Paris. "I'll advise my friends not to come to France. I don't care a damn about the Cannes Film Festival. And I'll send the Légion d'Honneur medal back to the embassy double-quick — I don't see any reason why I should hang on to a thing like that, given to me by a country that flouts its own motto of 'liberty, equality, fraternity'."

Police first tried to question De Niro on February 6, but he had flown back to the United States with his pregnant wife the previous day. "There was gossip in the papers about me doing a bunk. All I did was go on a four-day trip and come back to continue work on the movie. Friends said: watch it, don't go back, you'll be regarded as guilty until proved innocent. I already knew that the investigating magistrate wanted to question me, that he had launched some kind of witch-hunt. But I'd been in Paris since October, so he'd had months to let me know. I saw no reason to duck out of anything and came back in the normal course of things."

After spending the whole night of February 10 shooting, De Niro returned to his hotel. He had barely got one hour's sleep when police knocked on his door. "I told them to get the hell out of here. I told the police inspector I'd like to get a bit of sleep. How long would they be needing me? One or two hours at most, he said. I went back to bed, and barely an hour later they were back, saying 'The magistrate can't wait, he wants to see you straight away'."

Meanwhile De Niro's lawyer, Georges Kiejman, a former justice minister, discovered that the magistrate, Frédéric N'Guyen, had ordered the police to bring De Niro in for questioning. "This was quite inadmissible," Kiejman says. "He was someone who was working in France, who has been charged with no crime, who has received no summons and who was taken in a police van to a police station as though he needed to be prevented from committing some terrible crime."

Unlike the former tennis champion Wojtek Fibak and the film producer Alain Sarde, both of whom have been formally charged in connection with the case, De Niro was questioned by police purely as a witness. "They wanted to show me photos of young women and see if I knew them. Yes, I knew one and had met two of them. Had I paid for them? No, never. I've never paid for a woman in my life.

"They said: 'There are rich and powerful people who do things with young girls.' 'No doubt,' I said, 'but what's it got to do with me?' They tried to involve me in all that . . . They kept me waiting endlessly."

Finally De Niro was brought before the magistrate N'Guyen: "I asked him why he had sent six men to pick me up as though I was a psychopath. 'I thought you'd have bodyguards, and we needed to be discreet.' He told me about the girls, 99 per cent of whom were non-professionals. He asked the same old questions. Did I know them? Had I had sex with them? Had I paid them? I swore with my hand on my heart that I'd not spent a single bloody centime on them. Two hours had turned into nine."

While De Niro was being questioned Kiejman called N'Guyen, who, he says, hung up on him. He then lodged a complaint on De Niro's behalf against the magistrate for obstructing his freedom of movement and for violating the secrecy of the investigation.

"The harm's done now," De Niro says. "I don't blame the system. Magistrates have a lot of power, and why not? But that particular magistrate abused his authority. I don't know what his problem is, but he's clearly got one. He went on and on about rich and powerful people who thought they could get away with anything. Even the police seemed embarrassed at the way he went about things."

Could something similar have happened to him in the United States? "Yes of course. But that's not the point. I'm a guest of your country. What goes on in the States reaches levels of absurdity we're all aware of. How come you haven't learnt from our mistakes? France is well-known for being a land of freedom. It was in France that film-makers who were victims of McCarthyism sought refuge."

(February 25)

Indonesian rioters vent fury on Chinese

Jean-Claude Pomonti
In Jakarta

OUTBREAKS of violence are always brutal in Indonesia. Those directed at the Chinese community since the beginning of the year are no exception. Sometimes a mere rumour that rice or sugar is about to go up slightly in price is enough to spur the poor to vent their anger on those they believe to be responsible: small Chinese shopkeepers. Dozens of stores and stalls have been looted and sometimes burned down in Java.

The first incidents were reported at the beginning of the year in eastern Java. Then, during the second week of February, violence spread to the centre and west of Java, an island where around 120 million people, or 60 per cent of Indonesia's population, live in overcrowded conditions.

Unrest worsened with the looting and burning of factories, hotels, shopping centres and Christian churches. Then came the first deaths among rioters in Java and the island of Lombok. Police opened fire at least once to disperse a crowd.

In June 1997, the dollar was worth about 2,500 rupiahs. By mid-January 1998 the Indonesian currency had fallen to a sixth of its value. Even though it subsequently recovered, in mid-February it was trading at about 10,000 rupiahs to the dollar. The bankruptcies caused by the crisis have resulted in thousands of redundancies. This year growth is expected to be, at best, zero.

Last year severe drought hit Indonesia, sparking fires that polluted the whole region and caused a serious cereal shortfall. The prices of staple commodities rocketed by 20-80 per cent, while unemployment worsened. After several years of steady growth, less than 20 per cent of Indonesia's 200 million inhabitants were living below the poverty line in 1996; they are thought to number twice as many today. The country faces an abrupt fall in the standard of living: with the recession, annual income per capita is officially expected to plummet from $1,100 to only $600 by the end of 1998.

Initially, public resentment focused on the Chinese community, which is an easy target. It accounts for only about 3-4 per cent of the population, or twice that figure if Sino-Indonesians are included. While more than 85 per cent of Indonesians are Muslims, nearly half the Chinese are Christians. Others are Buddhists. Only a small minority has converted to Islam.



Indonesian police chase looters from Chinese shops in Pagaralam, in Sumatra. Chinese shop-owners have borne the brunt of popular anger against rising prices PHOTOGRAPH: SRIWIJAYA POS

Chinese conglomerates, often enjoying close ties with President Suharto's children, were among the first to benefit from two decades of economic growth. The six biggest taxpayers in 1996 were all of Chinese origin. Three of the president's children occupied the 8th, 9th and 19th positions. The Chinese community is believed to control about two-thirds of the private sector.

But the only thing that can threaten Indonesia's Chinese billionaires, who are just as deeply in debt as their local counterparts, is the introduction of swingeing monetary adjustments. Thanks to networks of overseas Chinese, they long ago placed some of their assets abroad, in countries such as Singapore, Hong Kong, Australia and the United States. Many Indonesian Chinese have dual nationality, or a permanent right to reside overseas.

When the Chinese New Year festivities were banned at the end of January so as to avoid trouble, many Chinese simply took off to celebrate the event in Singapore or Hong Kong, where they own property.

So far, rioters have taken it out on the most vulnerable section of the Chinese community, who also form the biggest group — owners of small factories, retailers, wholesalers, restaurateurs and hoteliers. Middle-class Chinese are easy prey, especially when a stretched police force arrives too late, or is reluctant to intervene at all. The word "Muslim" scrawled on the closed shutters of a shop offers only a certain degree of protection.

The recent history of Indonesia is littered with outbreaks of violence, often against the Chinese. In the fifties hundreds of thousands of them had to return to China. In 1966, when the pro-Chinese Communist party was banned, General Suharto's army massacred hundreds of thousands of alleged communist supporters. Indonesian Chinese were among the victims of those pogroms.

In 1996 and early 1997, Chinese businesses, Christian churches and police stations in Sumatra and Java were burnt down and ransacked by crowds of young Muslims, who saw them as symbols of power and wealth. At that time — before the economic crisis — Indonesia still enjoyed a steady rate of growth. But the fruits of that prosperity were very unfairly shared out.

Last January the inhabitants of Tangerang, an industrial suburb of Jakarta hard hit by unemployment, smashed up and set fire to small open-air restaurants, thought to be the haunt of prostitutes and gamblers, before the police and fire services could intervene. On several occasions, they had unsuccessfully asked the police to stop what was going on in the restaurants, which they regarded as a provocation during Ramadan.

The Suharto regime has taken a very firm line with rioters. In mid-February the army opened fire to disperse angry crowds. Hundreds of protesters were arrested. The Chinese found refuge in police stations and barracks.

Leading Muslim organisations stepped in to try to take the heat out of the situation. "The Chinese are our brothers", a rally in Jakarta was told by Amien Rais, president of the Muhammadiyah, which has 20 million members. "Empty stomachs can't wait, so don't blame our people for running amok because they're hungry. But the Chinese aren't to blame. I think the government has an absolute duty to provide the population with enough rice and staple commodities."

Preachers belonging to Nahdlatul Ulama, which has nearly 30 million members, travelled the country to restore calm. The older inhabitants of villages and country towns have also urged moderation.

Sometimes the army intervenes just in time. In other cases, it manages to restore order only after the event. Protecting the Chinese is not popular. The fact that protesters have not directed their wrath against the government suits the authorities.

The Chinese have been through all this before. Those able to do so took precautions without waiting for the situation to deteriorate, as it did from December on. By the end of 1997, hundreds of millions of dollars had been transferred to Australia alone. The overall outflow of capital has increased sharply, even if Chinese debts account for much of Indonesia's private-sector foreign debt, currently put at $74 billion.

The wealthy follow a well-tried timetable of precautions: first they send some of their capital abroad, then they evacuate women and children. Heads of families follow only when they regard the situation as intolerable.

But millions of Chinese are forced to stay at home, or at best find refuge well away from the main centres of unrest. It is some consolation that by mid-February the Chinese community had not yet suffered any fatal casualties.

Meanwhile Indonesia's neighbours, such as Singapore and Malaysia, are worried by the worst possible scenario — a meltdown in Indonesia, which would cause a massive exodus of Chinese or indeed other Indonesians fleeing the violence across the Strait of Malacca. Coastal surveillance was stepped up recently. Beijing, whose policy is to protect overseas Chinese communities, could not stand back and do nothing in the event of an exodus of Indonesian Chinese.

Things have not yet come to that. The recent riots may peter out. But the social effects of the economic crisis look like worsening before a recovery gets under way. The immediate future does not look good: bankruptcies, factory closures, sporadic food shortages and hundreds of thousands more redundancies are on the cards. The root causes of the violence that has already manifested itself are not going to go away. The Indonesian Chinese still have good reason to feel nervous.

(February 21)

Yugoslav warlord link in Swedish mafia hit

Bruno Peltier in Stockholm

DURING his lifetime Dragan Joksovic, or "Jokso", was a much-feared figure in the Swedish underworld. The tall, 42-year-old Montenegrin, who was murdered in Stockholm in February, was Zeljko Raznatovic's henchman in Sweden. Raznatovic is better known as "Arkan", the leader of a notorious Serb militia group known as the "Tigers" that committed atrocities during the war in the former Yugoslavia.

The Swedish police suspected Jokso of being involved in the lucrative business of cigarette smuggling on Arkan's behalf. Investigators believe that Arkan has just sent four hitmen to Stockholm to settle scores with those behind the murder. Several possible targets have apparently made themselves scarce.

Arkan and Jokso, both Montenegrins of the same generation, started their operations in Sweden in the late seventies. The Yugoslav community was well-established there, particularly in the restaurant trade. Jokso carved himself a niche in the murky world of Stockholm discos and gambling dens, acting as thug, night watchman and bodyguard for the "night-club king".

Arkan committed a series of bank hold-ups, according to police. Arrested in 1979, he was sprung from jail the day before his trial by a group of commandos thought to include Jokso. Officially, the future head of the Tigers never set foot in Sweden again. But the authorities suspect he returned more than once under a false identity to see his son, whom he had by a Swedish woman.

Jokso stayed on in Stockholm and gradually moved up the ranks of the local mafia. He rarely got caught. "Usually plaintiffs and witnesses backed down during investigations because they were intimidated by his reputation and his methods," says Kenneth Wiman, a police inspector who had been on Jokso's tracks for 12 years. Only once was he caught in possession of cocaine and amphetamine samples, an offence for which he got a two-month jail sentence.

Meanwhile his career took off. He became a favourite guest of showbiz evenings. He appeared in the video of a well-known female pop singer. He graduated to a Mercedes, loosely-cut suits and his own special table at Solvalla, Stockholm's top racecourse.

Police suspected him of laundering drug money and the profits from cigarette-smuggling in gambling clubs. Cigarettes had become particularly lucrative after steadily rising in price over recent years (they now cost $5.50 a packet).

On February 4, the irresistible rise of Jokso came to an end at his Solvalla headquarters when he was shot twice in the head at point blank range by a 20-year-old Finnish man, who gave himself up to police without a struggle. Was it a case of "personal revenge", as the killer claimed? Investigators think it was more likely to have been a contract killing organised by mafia rivals.

They are particularly interested in Jokso's former right-hand man, who is believed to have intercepted and sold several consignments of cigarettes from Yugoslavia, triggering reprisals during the summer of 1997.

As well as dispatching his hitmen to Stockholm, Arkan has apparently, according to the Swedish secret police (Sapo) and military intelligence (Must), threatened to take his revenge by attacking Swedish S-for troops stationed in Bosnia. The threat is being "taken seriously", says the army, which has tightened up security there.

(February 24)

Le Monde

Directeur: Jean-Marie Colombani



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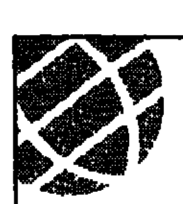
The Ministry of Health (MOH) of the Government of Cambodia, with financial assistance from the Asian development Bank, is planning to implement a four year pilot project testing the cost-effectiveness of contracting for District Health Services.

Contractors will be responsible for providing a specified package of primary health care services, as well as District Referral Hospital services to a population of approximately 100,000 people. Eight different districts from Kampong Cham, Takeo, and Prey Veng provinces will participate in the pilot project. One bidder will be eligible to receive up to three contracts.

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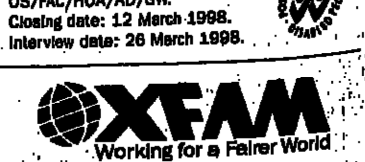
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CVs alone will not be accepted.
Please quote reference: OS/FAC/HOA/AD/GW.
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GUARDIAN WEEKLY
March 8 1998

King of the one-liners

OBITUARY
Henny Youngman

HENNY YOUNGMAN, who has died at 91, was an institution. There were some who said that's where he belonged, in an institution with iron bars on the window — serving a life sentence for wife insulting. That was what Youngman did for a living — on stage and in cabaret.

"My wife said to me, 'Let's go somewhere different this year.' I said 'Good idea. Try the kitchen.'" Or "My wife loves the sales. She'll buy anything with the word 'down'. She's just come home with an escalator." They loved that sort of thing in New York's smart joints like the Persian Room and the Latin Quarter and in the Atlantic City clubs. They particularly loved it when he came to the London Palladium and told the audience that he was a wealthy man. "I've got all I need for the rest of my life — providing I die at 4 o'clock tomorrow morning."

The most famous gag of all, and one that was to haunt him, was simply "Take my wife — please". He first said it by accident, when he asked an usher working at a radio studio to escort Mrs Youngman to her seat. He would be greeted with the words every time a cab driver or a doorman recognised him.

Youngman enjoyed his reputation as the comedians' comedian. Generations have regarded him as their model ever since New York's top columnist Walter Winchell first dubbed him "King of the one-liners". The fact that the best jokes often took two lines didn't matter. After all, who would not laugh at the story of the man stopped in the New York street who was asked: "Can you tell me how to get to Central Park? No? Right I'll mug you right here."

He may or may not have been the author of the one about the tourist who asked the Jewish woman the way to Carnegie Hall and was told "Practice, practice." But it was right out of his joke book, as was the one about the woman, asked directions by a Japanese gentleman, who replied "Pearl Harbour, you could find!" He took Jewish humour to new heights and crossed the ethnic barrier.

He was a tall, broad giant of a man who was born in the London ghetto of Whitechapel, the son of a Russian immigrant tailor. He was given the name Henry but he couldn't pronounce it properly so Henny he became and Henny he stayed.

His family emigrated to the United States six months after his birth, of which he would say: "I was so ugly the doctor slapped my mother."

Like many a Jewish parent his father wanted him to be a violinist but thought he would make more money as a printer. He learned the violin while studying printing at the Brooklyn Vocational Trade School. But he was much more interested in comedians, particularly Milton Berle, who told the sort of jokes he liked.

It was Berle who suggested that he go into showbusiness, and they became lifelong friends, although they were not beyond trading insults. "I once told Milton that if he had his life to do over again he should do it overseas. I told him, 'I looked high and low for you but I didn't look low enough'."

At first Henny became a bandleader, heading a group called Henny Youngman and the Swanee Syncopators. The owner of the Swan Lake Inn at the Catskills liked the jokes Youngman told between the musical numbers better than the music, and so fired the band and kept him on as a comedian.

Youngman had been booked to work with Kate Smith on her radio programme for two years. Like Jack Benny he took advantage of his early training and featured the violin in his act. Unlike Benny, it was jokes, not situations, that got his audiences holding their sides. He would say: "I never prepare a show, I just walk out and make jokes. One joke leads to another; I know what I'm doing."

Michael Freedland

Henny Youngman, comedian, born March 16, 1906; died February 24, 1998.

In 1971 Germaine Greer caused a storm with her book The Female Eunuch. Now she has decided to write a sequel. **Katherine Viner** finds out why

Look forward in anger

IT HAS taken 27 years, but it looks like we've got it: the sequel to The Female Eunuch. It was announced last week that Germaine Greer has received an $800,000 advance for the book she never thought she'd write: the Eunuch's follow-up, called The Whole Woman. Of late, we've heard her views of contemporary arts and her acerbic witticisms on BBC television's The Late Show, and read her memoir of her father, Daddy We Hardly Knew You. But 1999 will see the return of Greer doing what she does best: a feminist polemic on the brutal truths, as she sees them, of women's lives today.

But while the air is still alive with discussions about the new, nineties-style feminism, what relevance can the most important feminist of the seventies have today? And has Germaine Greer anything to say to the women who are young enough to be her grandchildren?

The early thoughts for Greer's new book were laid out in a speech she gave at the Melbourne Book Festival last year. The crux of her thesis is that women's sexuality is still a battleground; that although she and other seventies feminists may have fought for women to be able to have sex freely and without shame, nineties women feel they're unacceptable if they don't have sex.

"In 1968, women had the right to say no, without apology," she said. "What they didn't have was the right to say yes. Now they have a duty to say yes to whatever their partners may desire, no holds are barred. Women cannot admit to feeling disgust or to not enjoying the stuff that is going on — not if they want to seem cool, even if they have to take muscle relaxants to do it."

She claims that sex has been both elevated, so that it has greater importance than anything else, and emptied of meaning, and she claims that female attributes such as the womb and ovaries have come to be seen as irrelevant extras. "Where once women were nothing but reproductive organs and reproductiveness explained most of their behaviours," she writes, "they may now claim no specifically female organs and no specifically female functions. The 1969 female eunuch was nothing but a womb; the 1997 woman eunuch has no womb."

Thus, Greer says, men who believe they are women trapped in men's bodies are given breasts and a cleft and thus become "female"; motherhood is not venerated; and the breast has ceased to be a "food-giver" and has instead become an "erotic fetish".

To remind us that some things don't change, Greer reasserts that our culture's dependence on penetration — away from "necking, petting, foreplay by whatever name" — helps to keep women submissive, which is why "the majority of men . . . refuse to allow their body's outline to be breached". She says that, for men, even a doctor's probe is too much of a violation. "The penetratee, regardless of sex, cannot rule, OK? The person on the receiving end is fucked, finished, unserviceable, degraded."

Her comments, which will form the starting point for her new book, are both radical and up-to-date, and suggest that The Whole Woman will be not a rehash of The Female Eunuch but an important new polemic in its own right. Her book is being eagerly looked forward to as a radical, challenging voice — a relief in a world where placating men seems more important than anything else. If Greer's ideas could make the kind of splash today that they did in 1971, we are in for exciting times.

Greer says that the idea to write a follow-up to The Female Eunuch came when she was researching a book about women and medicine. "I was thinking about why they can pull people in for cervical smears when they're medically a very dodgy process. I was thinking of someone I know who went to Harley Street to have a hysterectomy because she'd been recalled six times for her smear tests and she was terrified. It's because there's a climate of sheer terror — and I realised that, whatever happens, women get the worst of it."

'The 1969 female eunuch was nothing but a womb; the 1997 woman eunuch has no womb.'



Greer: 'Life is more difficult than the new feminists suggest'

It was also, she says, provoked by the Government's new women MPs. "Just what the fuck are all these women doing in fucking Parliament?" she says. "Who was opposing all this ridiculous behaviour in the Gulf? It was old men, not women. Have the women been told by the Blair machinery to keep their lipsticky mouths shut? The Government has done nothing . . . about women's issues. They've just got the girls in the background in their little suits going woo-woo."

Other feminists have disappointed her, too. "I couldn't believe that Betty Friedan said that Clinton hasn't done anything wrong. Here he is fucking the faces of little girls and she says she doesn't care! She says Clinton's good on women's issues. Like access to abortion? Gee, thanks, that's all we ever wanted, to be scraped out."

She is similarly dismissive about the so-called new feminism in Britain. "Life is more difficult than these new feminists suggest," she says. "We're not all young career girls who are pleased to wear little strappy sandals." In a review of Natasha Walter's book The New Feminism in the Times Educational Supplement, Greer wrote: "Walter's book seems above all to reassure the faint-hearted that there is nothing to fear from feminism. If the next generation of feminists adopts her brand of unenlightened complacency, there will be nothing to hope for either."

Walter meanwhile thinks Greer is mistaken; that the world for women has changed for the better, not the worse. "Women's lives simply aren't the same any more, and that's partly because of The Female Eunuch," she says. "But I think Greer is coming from the perspective of someone who's lived through the sixties, seventies and eighties, and she was hoping for a big revolution that didn't happen. Whereas we can say as young women that it is possible to be optimistic. In a way, The Female Eunuch was a very young woman's book, in that it put the enjoyment of sexuality centre stage. Perhaps Greer is writing from a different perspective now and maybe she considers that the enjoyment of sex isn't as relevant today."

Walter also believes that Greer's focus on sex and the body is no longer as relevant as she suggests. "The personal and the political are not identical any more, and the site of action is out there in the public sphere, trying to get political and economic equality."

When The Female Eunuch was published in 1971, the idea that the personal is political — that what we do in our personal lives is governed or at least influenced, by political factors — was largely unheard of. It is impossible to overestimate the impact the book had, and indeed still has — it has sold a million copies worldwide, been translated into more than 12 languages and never been out of print.

"The Female Eunuch had a widespread influence — especially on people who were not already involved in radical politics," says Sheila Rowbotham, veteran of seventies' feminism and most recently author of A Century Of Women. "It took the ideas of women having a different destiny as something that could get women involved."

However, Rowbotham believes Greer's current line on sexuality — that where once women could not say yes, today they cannot say no — is in part due to Greer's own influence. "The women's movement as a whole was always rather worried about Germaine's stress on sex in any circumstances," she says.

Controversy seems to follow Greer — be it spats with fellow feminists or inviting the homeless into her home — but that's largely because she is so uncensorious of her own words. The bottom line is that when she speaks, people listen; and she speaks with a ferocity often lost from contemporary feminism.

Ann Oakley, who most recently co-edited Who's Afraid Of Feminism?, believes that we are in a phase of re-evaluation of what has happened to women since the sixties. "There seems to be a whole new wave of feminism looking at the backlash and looking at where women have got to. I think Greer's book is part of that. Her original book was extremely important, and I think it's a very good thing that she's following it up."

Greer meanwhile is putting passion into this project. "I spent six weeks solid just writing, getting up in the middle of the night," she says. "It was exhausting. I think that really good writing, especially political writing, is done fast, so that you've got to jump up and run around in tears, so that it provokes energy in other people as well as herself. "Well, I must be going through this for something," she says. "I want the book to be white hot and tense and quivering."

Will this be the defining feminist text of the nineties as The Female Eunuch was of the seventies? There's a year to wait to find out.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
March 8 1998

Letter from Bamako Robert Lacville

Preacher of peace

Robert Lacville

LUC SANGARE, Archbishop of Bamako, died in Abidjan on February 10, 1998, while attending the conference of West African archbishops. Reports say he was taken ill the day before, went into a coma, and died within 36 hours.

You wouldn't think many Malians would notice, since 95 per cent of them are Muslim and their main interest in Abdijan would be the airport on the way to Mecca. But there have been strong reactions throughout the country, for Archbishop Sangare was a loved and respected figure.

We lived through 93 years of military dictatorship until March 26, 1991, when a popular revolution swept the dictator into life imprisonment. Through the dark years before that time, when all big contracts went to companies who paid 15 per cent to the president's clique, when students were beaten up, teachers were imprisoned and peasant farmers were reduced to serfdom, there was an annual Christmas event which created excitement.

Luc Sangare's Christmas message was the one occasion in the year when a public figure spoke up for justice and compassion, against greed and cupidity. All Malians found themselves in the archbishop's measured criticism, and found hope that he would be heeded. He was responsible for the important influence of Christian churches in this overwhelmingly Islamic and overwhelmingly tolerant country.

The messages of sympathy about Luc Sangare's unexpected death came in from all over the globe on the world-wide web. Yes, Mali has a five-continent diaspora exchanging over the computer waves (or whatever it is that makes computers work): malinet à malinet.ml — and while I cannot tell the age of all these Malians at Stanford, Boston, Montreal and Cracovie (or Krakow: there are several Malians writing in from Poland), they all express a similar affectionate respect for the late archbishop. I have read messages from a Malian in New Zealand. There is a lady on our list called Khadijatou Fukui living in Kyoto in Japan, and there are several others in Tokyo.

Truly, you find these Malians everywhere, even in outer space. I'm not joking. There is a Malian called Cheick Modibo Diarra who runs Nasa's Pathfinder mission to Mars (though I guess he must have taken United States citizenship to do it). Mr Diarra made a celebrity visit to Mali last year, and was voted "Malian of the Year 1997" by readers of Le Républicain newspaper.

But Mr Diarra, bless him, will never touch his country like Luc Sangare, the preacher of peace. Messages of peace should of course come from churchmen. But in practice we find that peace messages come from politicians.

In places such as Ireland and Yugoslavia, the churches have actually been a factor for aggression, protecting communal, fratricidal tensions of ethnic separation and providing theological justification for aggression. Likewise the Dutch Reformed Church under apartheid. In Sudan, in Lebanon, in Iran, in Afghanistan and now in neighbouring Algeria, Muslim clerics have taken guns and imposed their will: forcing submission not to God, but to the gun.

In South Africa, politician Nelson Mandela found the words of peace and justice, and churchman Desmond Tutu came up alongside him. Here in Mali the democratic politicians have pursued a similar path of reconciliation — but Luc Sangare was ahead of them.



The ruins of Whitby Abbey on a headland above the Yorkshire town

Abbey set to make its mark on the world map

Maev Kennedy

ONE OF the most romantic ruins in England, Whitby Abbey, which perches on a headland over the Yorkshire town, is being considered as a World Heritage Site, to join Stonehenge, the Taj Mahal and the Pyramids.

In November the Culture Secretary, Chris Smith, called for UK nominations to add to the world's register of its most precious places. The move was to make up for the lull during the 12-year period after Mrs Thatcher pulled Britain out of Unesco, when the rest of the world added hundreds of sites.

By last summer when the Government rejoined, of 507 World Heritage Sites in 107 countries just 16 were in the UK, including two tiny colonial islands. The latest, maritime Greenwich, was added in January.

Now the nominations are flooding in, and English Heritage is assessing dozens of recommendations, including Whitby and the Oxford colleges. Whitby is most famous in popular imagination as the site where Bram Stoker's Dracula landed his coffin of Transylvanian soil on English rock.

It is being nominated as one of the earliest Christian sites in England — the scene of a 7th century meeting to resolve an obscure theological dispute which threatened to split the early Christian church.

The present abbey, built between the 13th and 15th centuries, and the headland, have been put forward by Scarborough council.

Whitby has been a Christian site since St Hilda founded a community in 657, possibly on the foundations of a Roman lighthouse. It was the setting for the Synod of Whitby in 664, one of the most crucial meetings of the early Church, on whether to adopt the Roman or Celtic date for Easter — the Synod voted for Rome.

Whitby's historical enemies included the Danes, who sacked the old abbey in 867; the Black Death, which ravaged both town and abbey in 1349; housebuilders who stole most of the medieval abbey to build their nearby homes; and coastal erosion, which still causes bits of the headland to drop on the cottages and boats below.

Becoming a World Heritage Site brings neither automatic financial benefits nor legal protection, but imposes a moral obligation on governments to take special care of the site.

Notes & Queries Joseph Harker

DOES a cold shower stop lust?

NO. BUT for men, it makes it difficult to do anything about it. — *Jon Tasker, Oxford*

FROM experience of buckets of cold water thrown over coupling dogs, it all depends on the timing. — *John Delafaille, Portishead, Bristol*

WHO started the practice of celebrating victory by spraying champagne over everybody?

THIS must have begun as a Veblenesque demonstration of conspicuous waste, to show how rich one is. But a mere bottle of champagne is nothing to modern sports professionals. To be truly Vebleneseque, you would need to build a mansion and then pay the RAF to bomb it. — *Robin Oakley-Hill, Sevenoaks, Kent*

IN 1967, the underrated American driver, Dan Gurney, helped Ford to beat Ferrari at Le Mans. Presented with a magnum of Moët, the teetotal Gurney popped the cork and, at a loss as to where best to pour the contents, sprayed the crowd of enthusiasts and photographers. — *John Winfield, Orston, Nottinghamshire*

IS IT illegal to duel if both parties agree to the risks?

NO, but it's illegal to win. — *Craig Zerouni, Los Angeles, USA*

AS PER the Indian Penal Code (the absurd set of laws bequeathed by Britain to India, Pakistan and Bangladesh), a duel is illegal because it implies a cavalier attitude to suicide — an attempt at which is an offence. If the stake is a married woman the duel is seen as an attempt to commit adultery.

The great mathematician Galois died young in a duel over a harlot. In my country, his duel would also have come under the purview of Immoral Traffic Act, another legacy of Britain. — *Arkaprabha Deb, Calcutta, India*

IT IS legal in Paraguay if both parties are registered blood donors. — *Tony Henshall, Addlestone, Surrey*

IS THERE any evidence that a price of, say £4.99, results in more sales than a price of £5?

PERHAPS the intent today is to make the purchase appear more attractive, but the original intent was quite different. Montgomery Ward stores in the United States found many years ago that when prices were in even dollar amounts, say $3.00 or $5.00, many people paid the exact amount and the clerk often pocketed the payment. By pricing at $2.97 or $3.95, this became virtually impossible, and the clerk was forced to make change from the till, thus creating a financial record of the transaction and eliminating the possibility of fraud. — *Grant Nielsen, Valera, Venezuela*

HOW fast would I have to travel to avoid being captured by a speed camera?

NOT FAST at all — most speed cameras are enclosed in steel cases, firmly rooted in concrete. — *Keith Vincent, Magalas, France*

THE shutter speed in conventional Gatso cameras, which use photographic film, is 1/1,000th of a second. Digital cameras can have much higher speeds, but for legal reasons they are not used in Britain. If the vehicle travelled, say, half a metre during the exposure, no characters could be recognised. This equates to a speed of a mere 1,800kmh. — *R Swan, Lambley, Nottinghamshire*

IS IT better to be intelligent or well-educated?

PROFESSOR Sir Cyril Burt, asked by the fledgling Mensa organisation for a suitable motto, is reputed to have suggested "Intelligence is no guarantee against stupidity". It was not accepted by the rest of the committee. — *Brian Turner, St Genis-Pouilly, France*

IN HER autobiography, I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings, Maya Angelou repeats the wise words told to her as a child: "She said that I must always be intolerant of ignorance but understanding of illiteracy. That some people, unable to go to school, were more educated and even more intelligent than college professors." — *Anna McNay, East Malling, Kent*

Any answers?

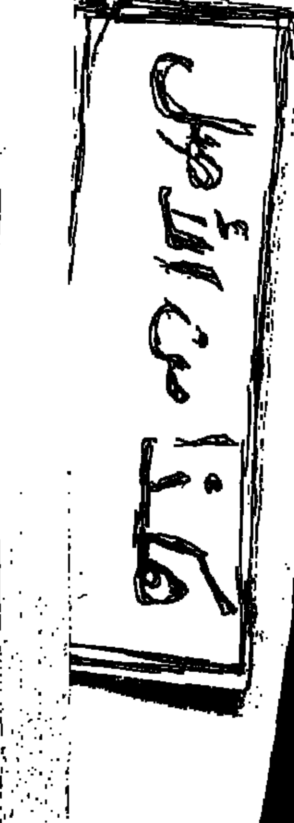
ARE there criteria for the number of segments in citrus fruit? — *N J Pryor, Cordoba, Argentina*

IS THERE any country in the world where the rich are getting poorer and the poor are getting richer? — *Jorge López, Melbourne, Australia*

WHO invented playing cards and what is the origin of Hearts, Diamonds, Clubs and Spades? — *Carol Winton, Newport Pagnell, Buckinghamshire*

IT IS often said that the only man-made object visible from space is the Great Wall of China. How can this be since, despite its obvious length, it is relatively narrow? — *Jim Gordon, Bedford*

Answers should be e-mailed to weekly@guardian.co.uk, faxed to 0171/+44171-242-0985, or posted to The Guardian Weekly, 75 Farringdon Road, London EC1M 3HQ. The Notes & Queries website is at http://nq.guardian.co.uk/



GUARDIAN WEEKLY
March 8 1998

Ma's out. Pa's out. Let's talk rude

TELEVISION
Nancy Banks-Smith

REAL WOMEN (BBC1) has rude vigour. About equal amounts of both. Susie, Mandy, Anna, Janet and Karen have been friends since school. You seem to have seen something like them recently.

Susie (Michelle Collins) has been around the block so often she is looking for a parking space. The Hen Party, the first of three episodes, celebrates her imminent marriage to a man she hardly knows.

Susie is Tarty. Janet (Gwyneth Strong), neurotically desperate for a baby, is Broody. Anna (Frances Barber), a high-flying journalist who seems to have crash-landed, is Hoity-Toity. Karen (Lesley Manville), too frightened to come out of the closet, is Windy. And Mandy, thank goodness, is Pauline Quirke. That big, round face is full of ripples and whirlpools. It transforms easily into a disappointed baby or a boxing glove. High cheekbones suddenly seem a liability.

Together they are a bunch of five, a fist. Rowdy, randy, raucous, laddish. Shrieking at jokes along the lines of: "Ma's out. Pa's out. Let's talk rude. Pee, poo, belly, bum, drawers." Just when you think the local hyenas will ring in and complain, they move on to a male strip show. By the end of the party, Anna has gone to bed with a waiter and Susie has been raped in an alley by Ron.

Like most of the men, Ron ("Ain't they locked him up yet?") seems to be on day release from the zoo.

But there are scenes of unexpected poignancy. A lavatory is the only privacy in lives like this. From the confessional of a cubicle, Susie's disembodied voice is telling Anna why she is getting married. "What I really dreaded most was ending up like them sad bastards you see in Sainsbury's ... One carrot, one pear, one banana. Lonely old gits. Anything's got to be better than that, ain't it?" (Answers on a postcard).

Jonathan Miller is not someone you rush to review. His views on critics vary from "an opportunistic infection of invertebrate parasites" to the snappier "a plankton of malignant invertebrates." Come to think of it, they don't vary at all.

"Bad reviews," he has said, "are irritating, and good reviews are like being interfered with in the back row of the cinema on a Wednesday afternoon." Frankly, one droops.

In **Dr Miller and the Islanders** (Horizon, BBC2) he made a rather lofty return to the Torres Strait, where, 100 years ago, six chaps from Cambridge arrived to study, as they put it, savage society and film some lively formation dancing.

Pidgin English is spoken in the islands, which lie between Papua New Guinea and Australia. It seems unintelligible, but suddenly, a recognisable word like "documentary" will rear up. Miller was on Radio Torres Strait for what the announcer called "Opinion bi you". That, I take it, is a phone-in. He listened captivated and bemused to this opaque form of communication with its intermittent flashes of light.

Very much as we listen to him. Pick the bones out of this: "For a population which increasingly mourns the loss of its traditional social identity, it can be no consolation to know that a flourishing academic discipline has sprung into existence by studying its by now moribund idiosyncrasies." Once you understand that Miller talks pidgin, you just have to hang on until a word you know comes round.

Henri Cartier-Bresson's photographs not only transform an event into visual poetry, they become a part of our own memories. **Adrian Searle** is haunted by them

Defining moments

THERE ARE two books of photographs by Henri Cartier-Bresson open on my desk. There they sit, amidst the writer's usual clutter, the piles of papers, the unopened mail, the whirring computer and my lucky mouse mat. Writers, I vouch, spend too much time beached, ashtrayed, altogether too much cloistered from the world. Sitting here, I can only envy the footloose photographer, and be grateful for those journeys, those photographs, which drag the world back into the room.

It is Henri Cartier-Bresson's 90th year and, to celebrate, there's a show called Europeans at the Hayward Gallery (until April 5); an exhibition of Cartier-Bresson's portraits at the National Portrait Gallery (until June 7); and a show of his drawings at the the Royal College of Art (until April 9).

Europeans is a selection of images from the photographer's forays and sojourns, from Istanbul to Dingle on Ireland's west coast, from an Estonian dancing contest to a news-stand in Naples, from a lonesome Belgian border post to a Moscow agricultural fair. The show brings together images taken as long ago as the late 1920s, and as recently as the 1970s. They depict a view of a disparate Europe, a great, grand, sprawling, multifarious chunk of the world. It is subsuming its regional differences in a homogenised culture, we fondly imagine, but just as it does so it tears itself apart, again and again.

Cartier-Bresson, the founding member of the Magnum photo agency (now 50 years old), escapee from the Reich, resistance worker, photo-journalist, artist and *flâneur*, is widely regarded as the consummate photographer of the century. Perhaps, as someone recently said to me, his photographs are just too perfect.

What can this mean? Cartier-Bresson's patience, his impeccable, slightly surreal sense of composition, his detachment and his tact lend his photographs a look that has now become too familiar. Nowadays, his work has become a kind of cliché of "good photography". Another, altogether rougher and perhaps more cynical, pessimistic, openly intrusive and voyeuristic attitude towards the world has come more and more to dominate both photo-journalism and so-called "art" photography. By comparison, the Cartier-Bresson style can often look too smooth and — in lesser hands — just too cutesy, arty and studied.

But originality always becomes mannered when it is turned into a style by lesser talents. More importantly, we might begin to suspect certain of Cartier-Bresson's photographs of being set-ups rather than *verité* moments. Having thoroughly lost our innocence and our faith in the photo-journalistic image as a record of reality, we begin to assume that images have only a tenuous accord with actuality, and can no longer touch us. It is our loss.

Yet Cartier-Bresson's photographs are telling images, subtle, often very beautiful and full of poetry. They dwell on and in the moment: yet it is a moment that can sometimes look awfully contrived. How long did the photographer wait for the Estonian dancers to appear — just so — through that open doorway? Or for the little girl to step into the rhomboid of sunlight, as though she was stepping into the glare of a stage spotlight, right on cue, between the slanting shadows and the rearing walls of a corner of Trastevere, Rome, in 1959?

The best and worst of Cartier-Bresson's photographs look staged, perhaps because we cannot quite believe the world can fall into place so readily, that an image so redolent can offer itself to the camera so spontaneously (and to this camera, so often), so fully formed as an image, so alive with human relationships and non-relationships.

CARTIER-BRESSON'S images offer themselves up as an affirmation of the real, stilling a world in motion; people spied, trailed, caught casually on their way from one place to another. A catalogue of moments, chance alignments, particulars, details. The potency of these moments is compounded and heightened by the photograph, framed by it, perhaps even invented by it. Cartier-Bresson's photographs have colluded not just in recording, but in the invention of history. His portraits, especially, offer us what have become definitive images of the figures they depict. Camus, with his collar turned up, the existential cigarette in his mouth. A young Truman Capote amidst tropical leaves. Ezra Pound, old, spent and imploded, his hair frizzed in sunlight. Sartre on a bridge over the Seine, squinting at being and nothingness while he sucks on his pipe.

Caught in the act . . . the Coronation of George VI, London, 1937

The famous, the infamous, the anonymous, the cut short, the public and the private cross and recross, oblivious to one another and linked by the photographer's gaze, his life, his itineraries, his journeys, friendships and assignments.

Here's Alberto Giacometti, fishing in his pocket for keys, newspapers bundled under his arm; Tony Hancock pensive, sitting at the bottom of the stairs; fishermen on Russian ice, pigs in Dutch sties, tipsters in Tipperary, Marilyn and Stravinsky, Bonnard and Bacon and Duchamp. Picasso bullish, stripped to the waist, Ted Dexter biting his nails in the pavilion, waiting to go out to bat.

How many photographs, how many images pass before our eyes each day? How is it, feasting every day on so many images, that we distinguish between those things we have seen for ourselves, with our own eyes, and those which come to us already caught in the shutter, instant memories already fixed for us on the paper? Perhaps we can no longer distinguish with any certainty what we know for ourselves and what we have been told and shown. Many of Cartier-Bresson's photographs have already become one with our memories, and have affected how we look and what we recognise. His photographs continue to haunt us. This, rather than style, is his true legacy, and a more fitting tribute I cannot imagine.

Playing long, hot and cool

JAZZ
John Fordham

LIKE a penny whistle in St Paul's, the cool and glancing music of the Paul Motian and Kenny Wheeler bands could easily have been dwarfed by the vast space of London's Barbican Hall. Yet this concert was a testament to the jazz axiom that music in the right hands and the right spirit can be cool and hot at the same time.

Both ensembles showed a mixture of undemonstrative virtuosity, probing intelligence and massive experience that would be hard to beat on one stage. Every one of the seven musicians is a bandleader in his own right.

Wheeler's quartet delivered the kind of music that made the British trumpeter's disc, Angel Song, one of last year's greatest jazz albums. His horn partner was a jazz legend, the alto saxophonist Lee Konitz — a man whose sound can suggest a flute or even a violin as much as a sax. Bass virtuoso Dave Holland and the inimitable guitar stylist Bill Frisell completed the ensemble.

As on the disc, the sound was airy, spacious and fragile as china. Sometimes the lines had an almost baroque clarity and deliberation, often the musicians would echo and resolve each other's thoughts, and the constantly changing textures gave vibrant life to a reserved and oblique style.

Holland's soft, fluttering figures on bass formed a hypnotic combination with Frisell's padding chords and softly squirming dissonances, and Wheeler and Konitz were fascinating, whether playing separately or together.

Konitz was pure and still, toying with inflections and rhythmic manipulation in long, legato improvisations. Wheeler swung effortlessly between trombone-like low notes and soft, gliding squeals, and his constructions were as taut as sonnets.

The music took in yearning, faintly bluesy pieces that recalled Ornette Coleman, soft, amiable swing like old Chet Baker/Gerry Mulligan tunes, lonely refrains that might have come from Miles Davis's Sketches Of Spain.

American drummer Paul Motian's band had one fewer player but made more noise. They played with more one-touch spontaneity, eschewed sheet music, and were more conventionally jazzy, despite a good many free-collective passages.

Motian has a unique drumming style, seemingly operating in a parallel universe to his partners but with a psychic link between. Frisell reappeared, and, remarkably, performed the complementary roles of part-time bassist, pianist and guitarist.

The great saxophonist, Joe Lovano, wound himself inventively between the two, with intricate long lines that seemed to be drawn from some bottomless well of fresh sax phrasing. On a handful of standard ballads, he reminded his listeners why he's one of the contemporary scene's invincible maestros.

Three's ecstasy

CINEMA
Richard Williams

WE'VE been here before, or so we think. For most of its three and a half hours, the protagonists of Jean Eustache's **La Maman et la Putain** (The Mother And The Whore) sit around the cafés and apartments of Saint Germain des Prés. There are three of them, a man and two women. They drink pastis, smoke proper French cigarettes, and talk. Then they go to bed. Afterwards they have bitter arguments.

It's shot in black and white, of course, on what looks like bin-end stock. This is realism. When somebody puts a record on, we have to listen to the whole thing. In the café scenes, we find ourselves sneaking a look over someone's shoulder to see who's at the next table, just like [illegible]. And when the characters leave the frame, the camera tends to hang around for a few seconds, as if it might be looking for something else.

This sort of thing wasn't even new in 1973, the year in which the film was first released. Thanks to the Cahiers du Cinéma gang — Truffaut, Godard, Rohmer — it was familiar ground, to the point of cliché. Eustache, a few years younger, was their acolyte, and his film faithfully recreates their techniques.

Yet, in a way, its willingness to conform to the stereotype is part of the film's extraordinary strength. For there can be no doubt that La Maman et la Putain is a masterpiece, a film of deep insight and coruscating honesty which also stands as the mature summary of all the discoveries made by the New Wave.

Jean-Pierre Léaud plays Alexandre, a man in his mid-20s, perpetually broke. He lives with Marie (Bernadette Lafont), a boutique owner; she's a little older, and the apartment is hers.

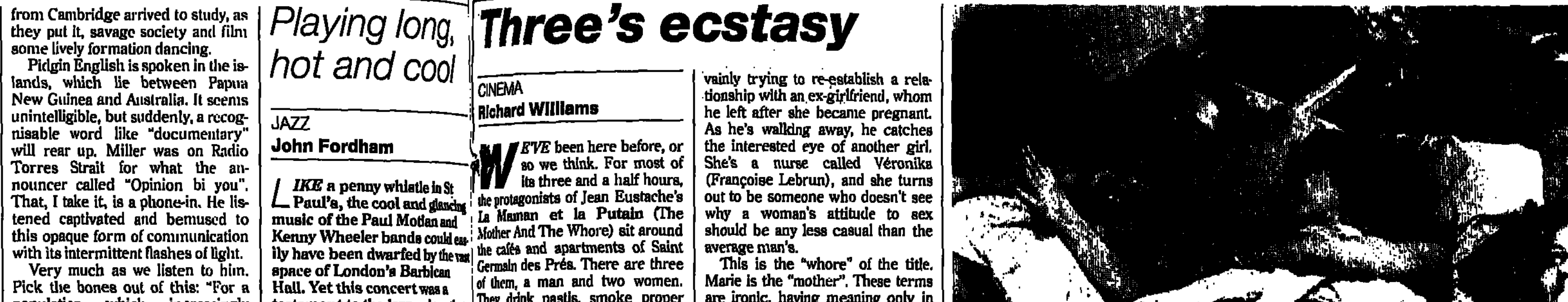
When we meet Alexandre, he's vainly trying to re-establish a relationship with an ex-girlfriend, whom he left after she became pregnant. As he's walking away, he catches the interested eye of another girl. She's a nurse called Véronika (Françoise Lebrun), and she turns out to be someone who doesn't see why a woman's attitude to sex should be any less casual than the average man's.

This is the "whore" of the title. Marie is the "mother". These terms are ironic, having meaning only in Alexandre's imagination, but even he can see the impossible absurdity of a moral Utopia in which Marie cooks him a bourgeois supper of *lapin à la moutarde*, Véronika gives him guilt-free sex, and everybody's happy. Gradually, as the women's characters emerge, the emotional texture of the film darkens and deepens.

If The Ice Storm seemed like an artistic reconstruction of the shifting sexual ground of the early 1970s, La Maman et la Putain is the real thing. And, thanks to its authenticity, it also feels timeless. Of the three characters, there isn't one who genuinely knows what he or she really wants. Each is chasing a kind of freedom, yet jealousy has the power to destroy them all.

They talk, and talk, and talk. The film is full of words, arranged into monologues and cross-talk, and delivered with such emotional directness that we, making fond assumptions about New Wave methods, imagine the actors must be improvising. Yet Eustache wrote every word, producing moments of fleeting (and sometimes deceptive) insight, unafraid of contradiction and paradox. "I lied to other people a few times," Alexandre says, "but I never lied to myself."

But Léaud doesn't get all the best lines. The brilliant Lafont finds the depth behind Marie's sardonic realism. And Lebrun, towards the close, faces the camera for a full quarter of an hour to analyse women's sexual options in a tear-streaked *tour de force*. Even in 1998, she's worth listening to.



Whore's play . . . Jean-Pierre Léaud, Bernadette Lafont and Françoise Lebrun in La Maman et la Putain

Our knowledge of the unhappy lives of some of the real people involved means that the film comes bathed in a mildly prurient glow. The temptation to see it in these terms should be resisted.

Yet the fact that Eustache killed himself without having made another significant film intensifies the feeling that La Maman et la Putain is everything he felt, all at once. This is what he discovered, and what he had to say. He put it all into this movie. It may last three and a half hours, but the sense of concentration is overwhelming.

IF the enforced portage of more than 10 million Africans to the Americas between the 15th and 19th centuries represents the most significant single social phenomenon of the present millennium, then somebody should certainly have made a film about it. But not, as it turns out, Steven Spielberg.

Amistad, the lavishly produced reconstruction of a 1839 shipboard slaves' revolt and its consequences, fails much in the way that the adaptation of Schindler's Ark failed in the same hands. There is a suspicion of dramatic expediency lurking in almost every scene.

Spielberg is unable to let a story tell itself without shaping and sanding and polishing every edge and corner until he is satisfied that it fits his own needs and his audience's predisposition.

Spielberg wants us to believe that the Amistad revolt, and the judgment of the Supreme Court over the 53 Africans who survived its journey, represented a turning point in the history of slavery. It is, indeed, a remarkable story. But his framing and projection of the tale is so tendentious and manipulative that we find ourselves unable to respond to the real truths it contains.

Having bloodily overpowered their captors on the journey along the coast of Cuba, sparing only two, whom they order to sail them straight back across the Atlantic, the Africans are tricked into a landfall at Long Island. Claimed as possessions by various parties, they are taken up by a couple of abolitionists, Theodore Joadson (Morgan Freeman) and Lewis Tappan (Stellan Skarsgard), abetted in Spielberg's version by an energetic young lawyer, Baldwin (Matthew McConaughey). Against them stands the serving US president, Martin Van Buren (Nigel Hawthorne); their hope lies in convincing a former president, John Quincy Adams (Anthony Hopkins), out of retirement to persuade the Supreme Court that the Africans belong to no one but themselves.

As Cinqué, the Africans' leader, Djimon Hounsou has the fewest lines, and could therefore be said to get the best deal. But he also has the misfortune to stand at the centre of the film's greatest banality, which is its idiotic representation of the Africans, as vulgarly stereotyped as Robert Mapplethorpe's studies of black men. It's all too easy to imagine some future audience, say in 50 years' time, watching Amistad and laughing at its pitiful need to romanticise these characters and their story.

Naked despair from Binoche

THEATRE
Michael Billington

JULIETTE BINOCHE looks marvellous: the contoured cheeks, the deep-set eyes, the pensive solitude give her the mysterious allure of stardom. She also acts with every fibre of her being in Jonathan Kent's rare revival of Pirandello's **Naked** at London's Almeida theatre. But one has to be honest and admit that her eccentric inflections add an extra dimension of difficulty to an already complex play.

All the familiar Pirandello themes are here: the antithesis of art and life, illusion and reality, mask and face, but what makes this 1922 play peculiarly elusive is that we are never quite sure what to make of the heroine, Ersilia. Is she an essentially innocent creature on to whom men project their varying needs and desires? Or is she a skilful manipulator who constantly reinvents her own identity? Binoche suggests elements of both.

As always in Pirandello, truth is relative. We first see Ersilia, after an aborted suicide, being taken under the protective wing of a famous novelist who wants to fictionalise the account of her life he has read in a Roman newspaper. We deduce that she has been dismissed from the employ of the consul in Smyrna after the death of his child and that she has been rejected by a naval lieutenant in favour of a woman of his own class.

But with tormenting skill Pirandello constantly adds new layers to Ersilia's story. First a reporter arrives claiming its veracity is being questioned. Then comes the naval officer who discovers that he may not have been the precise occasion for Ersilia's projected suicide. And finally we get the consul himself from whom we glean more of the truth regarding the death of his daughter.

Each of these men, including the novelist, invents his own Ersilia: a mixture of fictive heroine, suicide victim, mistress and whore. Yet she herself conspires in her own re-creation. And this is the point Binoche avidly and intelligently seizes on: at one moment she is all blanched, dress-tearing vulnerability, at another full of masked, berouged assurance. Binoche's performance perfectly captures the character's shifting desperation: all it lacks is a matching vocal technique.

Haunting presence . . . Juliette Binoche as Ersilia PHOTO: NEIL LIBBERT

But Kent's production conveys Pirandello's ambiguity. Paul Brown's design is an intriguing mixture of the real and the symbolic. A superb performance from Oliver Ford-Davies as the novelist is accompanied by good ones from Kevin McNally as the far from honourable consul and Anita Reeves as the voice of Roman respectability.

Nicholas Wright's new version of the play adds to the pleasure of a teasingly mysterious evening dominated by the haunting presence of Binoche.

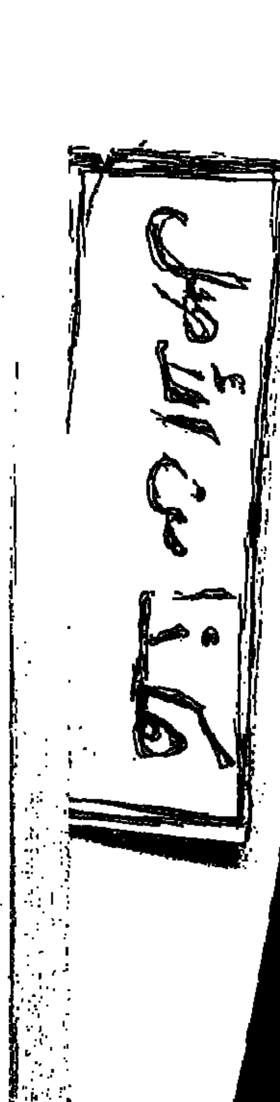
A minor miracle has occurred at the Lyric in Hammersmith. Terence Rattigan's final play, **Cause Célèbre**, which looked distinctly patchy at its 1977 première, has been given a production by Neil Bartlett that reveals it as one of the author's major works: one that combines a fierce attack on English sexual puritanism with deceptive technical skill.

Rattigan's starting point is the notorious case of Alma Rattenbury, who in 1935 was tried, along with her youthful lover, for the murder of her husband. Mrs Rattenbury was found not guilty but was publicly pilloried as a scarlet woman, and shortly after the case took her own life. Her lover was found guilty and sentenced to be hanged: he was, however, reprieved, and after seven years in jail emerged a free man. What Rattigan discovers in the case, however, is not sensation or suspense but a demonstration of his own obsessive theme: the dangers of emotional and sexual repression. He works through antitheses and parallels. In particular, he contrasts Alma Rattenbury, epitome of a life-loving hedonism, with a fictive female juror, Edith Davenport, whose whole credo is based on sexual denial.

But the entire play is a network of interlocking comparisons which say a lot about English class attitudes. Rattigan skilfully shows how, in England, sex and class forever intertwine. And where at first the play, deriving from a radio work, seemed clumsy in its leaps in time and place, it now emerges in Bartlett's production and Rae Smith's design as a work of calculated fluency: above all, Bartlett establishes by physical grouping Rattigan's deliberate juxtaposition of the affirmative Alma with the etiolated Edith.

He also gets wonderfully assured performances from his cast, in particular Amanda Harris as Alma, Diane Fletcher as Edith, and Neil Stacy as Alma's carpet-slippered counsel.

In that sense, the counsel is very like Rattigan himself. Born into the upper class, he constantly attacked its cruelty and emotional repression; and his final play has at least been revealed as a fitting monument to a subversive theatrical career.



Finding redemption through loss

Andrew Motion

Armadillo
by William Boyd
Hamish Hamilton 320pp £16.99

MARTIN AMIS, Julian Barnes, William Boyd, Ian McEwan, Graham Swift; they're powerfully distinct writers with lots in common. It's inevitable, given they're all men, all from similar middle-class backgrounds, and all belong to the same generation. Think of their politics in general and their views about woman in particular. Think of how they work science into their books. Think of their narratives — how full of japes and side glances they are. Think...

Hang on. Isn't Boyd beginning to sound like an odd man out? Isn't he more interested in telling stories than his peers? He's certainly more interested in telling them in time-honoured, time-honouring ways. Amis, in Night Train, recently wrote a thriller which keeps switching into language-sidings. McEwan, in Enduring Love, hoists his drama into the air on philosophy-thermals. Compared with these, Armadillo is unwaveringly true to first principles. It's marvellously paced and ingeniously plotted. A real page-turner, in fact.

Lorimer Black (real name Milo Blocj — he comes from a family of Transnistrian gypsies) works in London as a loss adjuster. As a what? It's OK, most people outside his office ask that too, so there's no shortage of explanations. The first one comes as the plot starts rolling: a Mr Dupree has hung himself among "the charred and melted naked bodies of near-thousand plastic mannequins"; his ex-employers make a claim on their insurance; the insurers think the fire may have been started deliberately; Lorimer Black is called in "to investigate it to see if the loss is in fact as great as it is claimed, and, if not, then to adjust it, downwards".

Evidently it's the sort of job ("Not independent but impartial") which leads to all sorts of problems on the ground — and to all kinds of ingenuities in a writer's mind. As Black follows the trail of intrigue back from Dupree, via various dodgy clients, to his own bosses, the symbols of his predicament heap up round him in well-ordered profusion.

They dovetail into an obsession with control. Just as Black's work is designed to "embody" the notion that life will always "disturb" the best laid plans, so his hobby (collecting ancient warrior-helmets) is relished as a form of aesthetic protection, and his journal-keeping as a manifest of order. It's the same with his sleeplessness. To cure this affliction, he attends a clinic where it emerges that his abnormally large number of lucid dreams are proof of his desire to "enter that perfect world where everything can be controlled". (The word "armadillo", incidentally, means "little armed man".)

Black's need to dominate and master is fed by a correspondingly strong sense of anxiety. There's his family, for one thing — dependent on him for money, and constantly threatening to burst into his office-world and expose the origins he has taken such pains to conceal. There's London, a vast maze through which he wants to cut a straight path, but which always leads him into "meandering trajectories". There's his ghastly colleague Torquil, whose disintegrating life might easily crush everything in his vicinity. Most troubling of all, there's Flavia Malinverno — gorgeous, married, and breaking through the walls of his life as she is swept against him on wave after wave of coincidence.

When insurance story and love story combine, we begin to realise that Black can only save his life by losing it. But we're privileged. We're readers. As far as Black himself is concerned, loss is loss, and cannot conveniently be adjusted. The "careful security" of his existence, "its deliberate order — was being so undermined that he could foresee a serious collapse". Ghastly Torquil is made homeless and comes to stay. Black's bosses turn against him as he unearths their wrongdoing. His poor old Dad dies. He is attacked by Flavia's juggling-club-wielding husband. Flavia herself, after delivering a single but life-changing kiss, seems to give him up. "From a position of steady normality — steady job, steady prospects, steady girlfriend — he now found himself adrift in uncertainty and chaos: no job, no car, no girlfriend, insolvent, fatherless, sleepless, loveless..."

If Boyd weren't such a generous writer, this catalogue of disasters would seem over-determined. As it is, they are happily embellished. By Marlobe, the foul-mouthed flower-seller. By David Watts (another false name), the preposterously plausible pop star. By Ivan Algamor, the helmet-dealer. By the further reaches of the Blocj family, getting and spending off Fulham Broadway. These creations are like ground-cover, swarming among the tall plants of a formal border, simultaneously linking them in a pattern and setting them off.

Do we ever doubt that Black will come through, getting the girl and keeping his integrity? Not really. There are moments when the tone of the book — which in this respect owes something to Kingsley Amis — sets up great expectations only to mock them. ("We are all navigators", Black reflects at one point, "quite pleased with the romantic associations of the metaphor".) There are others when life's welter "of happenstance and rotten luck" becomes overwhelming. But the amiable energy of the whole enterprise, let alone its obedience to the conventions of comedy, means that we read it feeling excited, but not in suspense.

It also means that we feel secure, in a morally stable universe. Black may have to pay for his pleasure, but in the process he learns about the perils of defensiveness (helped by getting his head stuck in one of his antique helmets), about the limits of control, and about the dangers of pretence. His reward is to realise his future at the same time as he connects with his past. And us? We feel good, watching the triumph of old-fashioned virtues. There will be more finely-written and strangely-imagined novels published this year, and plenty that are more anguished. But there won't be many so plainly enjoyable.

If you would like to order this book at the special price of £14 contact CultureShop (see advert below)



Boyd: marvellously paced and ingenious plot PHOTO: TOM JENKINS

A ticket to ride in Florida's badlands

Nicol Gerrard

Lucky You
by Carl Hiaasen
Macmillan £16.99 320pp

CARL HIAASEN, the kooky thriller writer who's made his native Florida into his swampy badlands, tends to lay his cards on the table, slapping down the royal flushes, the runs, the triumphant wild cards. He doesn't go in much for the bluff or for the cunning depths. His charm lies with the way that he writes with such zest and unfaltering boldness. He has been called satirist, but his books are as much farce as satire. He's been called grim, but it's feel-good grim he writes — happy endings and sweet-hearted heroes splash around in the shallows of horror; Hiaasen never lets them get out of their depth.

Lucky You is a wonderfully funny and happy book about badness and chaos; a beguiling mixture of naivety and perversity. It starts off at the speed with which it means to continue: JoLayne Lucks (black, spunky, unflappable and dear: Hiaasen's familiar downtrodden, uprising goodie) plays the same lottery numbers she has played every week for five years. Each number stands for an age at which she has dumped a hopeless man. Now her failures at 17, 19, 22, 24, 27, and 30 add up to a triumph: she wins $28 million.

Unfortunately for JoLayne, two baddies (white supremacists; acne-ridden, smelly, vicious) also win the lottery: $14 million apiece should be enough, but the baddies want to form a militia against the "Black Tide" and need all the money they can get. They steal JoLayne's ticket, but they've chosen the wrong woman. Now she is going to get it back. Enter Tom Krone, hotshot reporter, cynic with a heart of mush (a goodie, you see), and the race is on.

Hiaasen's Florida is frenetically insane. You get the impression as you read — of weeping Virgin Mary statues (the tears smell suspiciously of Charlie perfume); turtles with the faces of the 12 apostles painted on the domes; houses that blow up (never mind the dead person inside, it's not a goodie) — that Hiaasen is having a lot of fun with his wacky plot and his ludicrous subplots, with his deliciously potty details and queues of mad coincidences.

Hiaasen is forever in a state of outrage. His baddies are racists, corrupt judges, hypocritical spouses courting publicity and pretending grief for the voyeuristic cameras. His goodies are large-hearted and straightforward characters who take arms against wickedness and refuse to let the world be all darkness and bigotry.

There's not much attempted profundity in this Manichaean view, and there is a certain amount of letting people off the narrative hook. The villains of Lucky You might be ghastly, but they are also incompetent and thus harmless. All the hypocrites and criminals are laughed off the page. Hiaasen's fictional world might be swarming with nastiness and lunacy, but it never feels remotely in danger.

Safety — the lovely safety of a happy ending waiting round the corner all the time — makes this latest novel into a reliable pleasure. There are a couple of moments when nastiness can't be properly accommodated, and there is a tantalising sense of another kind of novel, waiting to be written. For Hiaasen's works might be deeper and darker if he allowed real-life murk to seep in; yet they would not be more ludicrously enjoyable.

Paperbacks

Desmond Christy

The Apotheosis of Captain Cook: European Mythmaking in the Pacific, by Gananath Obeyesekere (Princeton University Press, £11.95)

FANNY BURNEY thought Captain Cook was "the most moderate, humane and gentle circumnavigator". But was Cook a Prospero, bringing the magic of the Enlightenment to "savages" who took him for a God, or was he really a Conrad Kurtz figure, a man who loses his own identity and becomes the very savage he despises? This is a wonderfully interesting book that sparked off a a ferocious battle amongst anthropologists, ethnologists and historians. You might think it would be of rather narrow appeal, but it will be of interest to anyone trying to understand another culture. I'd be turning it into a novel now but for the little matter of Joseph Conrad.

Fraülein Else, by Arthur Schnitzler (Pushkin Press, £...)

A YOUNG woman can save her feckless father from debtors' prison. All she has to do is to ... wealthy social climber, Herr ... Dorsday. But what price will he ... this being a world where everything — beauty, morality, innocence — has a price tag? Schnitzler's brilliant novella, all told through Else's interior monologue, is one of a series of little books by a new press which wants to increase the choice of classic and contemporary European literature available in English. The reader is flattered at the front of each volume by a quotation from Emerson: "The profoundest thought or passion sleeps as in a mine, until it is discovered by an equal mind and heart." Lichtenberg put it another way: "A book is a mirror: if an ass peers into it, you can't expect an apostle to look out." But that wouldn't sell many books.

Richard Feynman: A Life in Science, by John Gribbin and Mary Gribbin (Penguin, £7.99)

WHY would the world fall in love with a physicist? No mystery at all when you get to know the man. The authors set out to do justice to the physics and the man. Both sides of the equation work perfectly.

Hungry Hearts, by Anzia Yezierska (Penguin, £6.99)

MILLIONS dream of becoming American. Anzia Yezierska came to America from a Polish-Russian shtetl in 1890 and shares all the pain of realising that dream. Oi weh! Oi weh! Did I slave for all these years in the sweatshops and put food on your plate and you Penguins and you just ... movies? Ach!

Saluting the leader . . . Oswald Mosley on the march in 1936 PHOTOGRAPH: FOX PHOTOS

A very British fascist

Ben Pimlott

Memoir of a Fascist Childhood:
A Boy in Mosley's Britain
by Trevor Grundy
Heinemann 203pp £17.99

Rules of the Game/Beyond the Pale: Memoirs of Sir Oswald Mosley and Family
by Nicholas Mosley
Pimlico 598pp £14

Revolution by Reason and Other Essays
by Oswald Mosley
edited by Michael Quill
Edwin Mellen Press 280pp £59.95

TREVOR GRUNDY is just old enough to remember the second world war. One vivid recollection is of sheltering in a small cupboard and listening to the doodlebugs overhead. His mother comforted him with soothing words. A very good man, she said, "called Hitler was trying to rescue Daddy and The Leader. After Hitler won the war, both would be released. Then the Jews would be for it".

Daddy was a British fascist interned under Regulation 18A. The Leader was Sir Oswald Mosley. The Grundys were foot soldiers in the pre- and post-war Mosley army, proud supporters of a monomaniac — one of the oddest balls thrown up by British politics in modern times.

Memoir Of A Fascist Childhood is a salutary reminder that ordinary people — star-struck women, spell-bound children — were affected by what, for Mosley's languid friends, often seemed like an upper-class game. Nicholas Mosley's account (reissued to coincide with a Channel 4 television series) examines the same, from the perspective of an intimate spectator — The Leader's eldest son.

Nicholas calls his study "memoirs", but it is nothing so simple. What he offers is a hopeful monster of a book: autobiography, biography, history, collected letters and diaries. The result is messy, and in need of tougher editing. Yet, taken as a whole the work is indisputably a great one — poignant, funny, tormentingly honest. It may be compared to Edmund Gosse's Father And Son which similarly explored a son's tangle with a father's dogmatism — but with the added dimension of paternal evil.

The father-son relationship is at the core. On the one hand, there is Nicholas the ... quizzical wordsmith, trying to make sense of a world of god-like adults. On the other, there is Sir Oswald — Faust in a pact with the Devil, or Oedipus doomed by a spurious power acquired from discovering the riddle of the Sphinx. The relationship remains tentative — as if the author still knows his filial place.

The dominating figure of the book is somebody who, supposedly driven by reason, was actually out of control. Nicholas suggests a man trapped by his own rhetoric. "He charmed his children as he charmed women," reflects Nicholas. Perhaps, the author implies, he also charmed himself. According to the author, instability and faithlessness were in the Mosley genes.

Oswald Mosley was born in 1896, from a line of baronets who maltreated their wives, deserted their children, and divided their time between hunting, shooting and promiscuity. Oswald barely knew his father, who was true to type. He grew up with a pious mother who invariably referred to him as her "man-child". Seeking maternal approval through macho excess started early. While doing aerobatics as a first world war pilot in order to impress her, the young Oswald crash-landed, smashed his leg, and was later invalided out of the armed forces as a result.

It turned out to be lucky — making him available, aged 22, to pick up a Tory seat in the 1918 election. Mosley's parliamentary career spanned 13 years, with a short gap in the middle. In that time, he fought six contests for three different parties, and one as an Independent. He married a Tory foreign secretary's daughter (Lady Cynthia — "Cimmie" — Curzon), befriended a Labour prime minister, dazzled the House with his rhetoric, briefly held ministerial office, and was widely tipped as a future leader of either major party.

His political views were consistent. From start to finish, he was a progressive. He championed the young, who had fought the war, against the old, who caused it; he was an advocate of the League of Nations; and he took up the economic rights of the oppressed. It was the last that led him out of the Conservative party and towards Labour, where he sided with the party's most radical spirits. In 1926 he published "Revolution by Reason", which boldly followed Maynard Keynes on the measures needed to tackle poverty — an essay re-published in a volume edited by Michael Quill, a present-day Mosley admirer.

In 1929, Mosley entered the Labour administration. In keeping with his own past, he pressed for action on unemployment. When he did not get it, he first resigned, then broke with Labour altogether. It is here that the swashbuckling adventure, hitherto the stuff of political legend, went sharply wrong.

In 1931, Sir Oswald and a handful of other MPs launched the *New* Party: all were defeated in the general election later the same year. At this point, embittered and frustrated, Mosley turned to a "modern", quick-fit solution currently in vogue on the Continent.

In October 1932, he founded the British Union of Fascists.

WHY? Nicholas is quite right to remind us that, however tumultuous his career, Sir Oswald cannot be dismissed as a mere climber: there were better ways up the greasy pole than by showing open contempt for virtually everybody in orthodox politics. But he is also right to draw attention to the perilous contrast between his public and private lives.

It was not so much Mosley's restless philandering — a standard upper-class hobby of the day provided it was done with discretion. It was more the gulf between his own social assumptions, and those of his working-class comrades. Trotsky's dismissal of him as "the perfumed popinjay of scented boudoirs" identified a serious weakness: not just for aristocratic ladies ("Vote Labour, Sleep Tory" was his motto), but for chic salons and fashionable millionaire weekends.

Sleep Tory became sleep fascist, after Mosley fell in love with Diana Guinness, a 22-year-old married Mitford sister who — together with her sister Unity, who shared her fascination with the Nazis — was taken up by the Führer as a friend.

Nicholas himself, then aged 10, and largely unknowing, was caught in the emotional maelstrom: the most moving passage describes with agonising precision Cimmie's rejection by her husband, her physical decline and early death, and her replacement by the younger, prettier, smarter, wittier Diana.

Perhaps it was the upheaval in his private life ... Mosley to go off the rails: perhaps it was the other way round. At any rate, once taken, the decision to set up a fascist organisation had its own momentum. As respectable followers fell away, The Leader was left in the company of a ragbag of misfits. He continued to insist that his own political beliefs had not altered. The BUF didn't object to every Jew, it claimed, only "the oily material swaggering Jew", in the words of an obscene Blackshirt doggerel, "The pot-bellied, sneering, money mad Jew / Who sells his country and his soil for gain..."

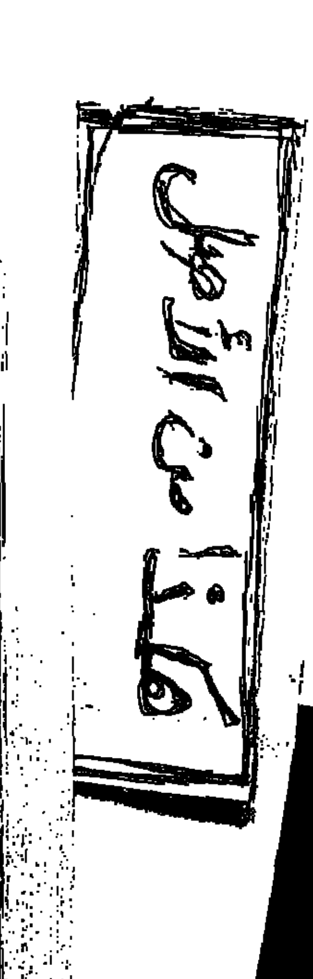
How much did the Blackshirts matter? Fascism never caught on in Britain as it did in other countries, and it is easy to dismiss the movement as a bunch of misguided boy scouts. However, 13,000 people attended the violent Olympia rally in June 1934: pretty good, after 20 months' existence. It is not fanciful to imagine that if the second world war had gone badly, British fascism might have grown in significance.

Nicholas himself served in the war with distinction — while continuing to think about, and communicate with, his interned father. "The years when my father was in prison," he recalls, "... were the years of my closest relationship with him." It was only after peace came, and Sir Oswald had founded the anti-immigrant Union Movement, that his son plucked up the courage to fall out with him.

Nicholas continued to love his father, while objecting to everything he stood for: it is the achievement of this book that the love seems admirable and appropriate. Others, on the other hand, will continue to find the patron saint of British racism as repellent as he was tragic.

"People caught the glow of his company, though ...," says Nicholas. However, ... Mosley never gained a mass following. In politics, ... he enjoyed the hunt, and got bored by the kill. "He lacks genuine fanaticism," noted Beatrice Webb. "I doubt whether he has the tenacity of a Hitler." This was shrewd: the truth was that he never showed a taste for actual power.

Mosley dominated the extreme right in Britain for decades — a menacing figure, whose presence symbolised the forces he represented. Nicholas Mosley's tender, thoughtful, surgical book should make us oddly thankful that these forces were led by a man who spoke of the future, while lamenting the past; and one who, for all the grand public claims, remained locked in a private, theatrical fantasy.



A trunk full of history

Mark Cocker

ALTHOUGH he died almost 450 years ago the legend of Robert Kett still touches the city of Norwich. Several important landmarks are associated with his deeds, while many roads and pubs have been named after him.

But his most enduring memorial is Kett's Oak, a tree that stands by a busy road about 12km south of the city, and identified as the original spot where this folk hero first raised his standard of revolt. The tree is now a somewhat forlorn, world-weary symbol of the man. It is a short, stocky veteran with a girth of about one and a half metres and just two principal branches. Several of the tree's main limbs have long been severed, and a layer of cement covers the bole's rotted heart.

As further support, two huge metal hoops were clamped to the trunk at chest height and over the decades the tree has half absorbed these braces. The only details to identify the tree's historic significance are the black railings surrounding it and a tiny plaque that reads "Kett's Oak 1549".

In early July of that year, Kett, although a significant landowner himself, joined popular protests against the regional trend towards the production of wool. While this was hugely profitable for the landowning classes it unbalanced the wider rural economy, since the enclosures around the sheep pasture cut off the poor rural communities from traditional common lands — the very basis of their subsistence agriculture.

Kett emerged as the leader of their protests and marched on Norwich to lay before the royal authorities their grievances over enclosures and the imposition of unjust rents. When he was denied passage, Kett the gentleman farmer showed that he had a natural talent for military strategy. Seizing a large area of high ground just to the east of the city called Mousehold Heath, [illegible] his 20,000 followers. He then went on to capture Norwich.



ILLUSTRATION: ANN HOBDAY

Kett's subsequent leadership of the revolt also demonstrated that he had a keen eye for political symbolism. His peasant army selected as its headquarters not the Norman fortress at the heart of England's second city, as might have been expected, but another huge oak tree with commanding views over the entire region. It was a telling location. Kett presented himself as a loyal citizen upholding the commonwealth traditions of the English people, and there was no more powerful symbol of Englishness than the oak.

The tree in question, now long gone, stood just 200m from our house. By the mid-16th century it was deeply embedded in local lore, known as the Oak of the Reformation, and may well have been a sapling at the time of the Norman conquest.

It was apparently so big that Kett's men [illegible] plankways between the major branches. Beneath its canopy they held regular religious services, councils of war and dispensed a remarkably restrained version of rebel justice.

However, Kett's rebellion could really have only one ending. His forces were eventually defeated by a royal army that included many German and Italian mercenaries. Several important rebels were hanged from the Oak of the Reformation, and Kett himself was executed at Norwich Castle.

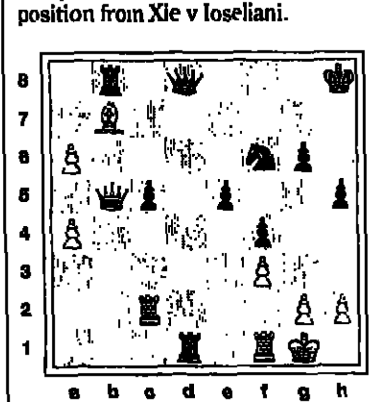
There, 400 years later, the city authorities finally found the political nerve to honour "a notable and courageous leader in the long struggle of the common people of England". But in the intervening centuries, every spring, Kett's Oak has fattened its buds and sent out its canopy of green as a silent memorial to his name.

Chess Leonard Barden

MALE chess masters like to complain about the lack of an undisputed world champion, but women players have learnt to live with it for a long time now. Hungary's Polgar sisters used to have better playing results than the official champions from China and the former Soviet Union, and the situation has remained muddled even after Zsuzsa, the oldest Polgar, won the title two years ago.

She has emigrated from Budapest to New York and started her own chess school, but has virtually abandoned active play, apart from an optimistic challenge to IBM's Deep Blue computer. Meanwhile Judit Polgar, aged 21, the best female player, has long made it clear that she is only interested in competing with the top men.

There was no [illegible] candidates tournament to find Zsuzsa's next challenger, until the Dutch finally agreed to host it at Groningen. Alisia Galliamova-Ivanchuk, former wife of a top-10 grandmaster, ran out an easy winner. But convoluted rules require yet another stage to decide the challenger. Galliamova must play a [illegible] Xie Jun, the former champion, who had an escape in the final round in this position from Xie v Ioseliani.



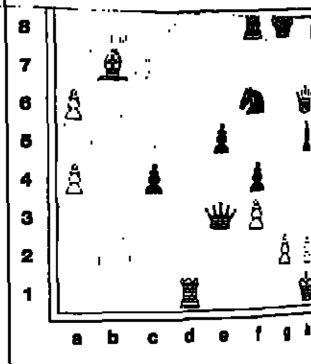
Under pressure, Black launched a hopeful check 1 . . . Qd4+. Now 2 Rf2 would keep the advantage, but Xie casually played her king into the corner by 2 Kh1?? c4?? Black could win by 2 . . . Qxa4! 3 Qe2 (3 Qxa4 Rxf1 mate) Rxf1+ 4 Qxf1 Qxc2. As played, the game soon reached this week's puzzle position.

Galliamova is little known outside Russia, but her convincing success in Groningen gives her a serious chance of defeating first Xie and then a rusty Zsuzsa Polgar. Women's chess might be better served if the championship followed the new men's knock-out system and so enable rising talents such as Britain's Harriet Hunt to make a serious attempt on the world crown.

Peng v Galliamova

1 Nf3 d5 2 d4 Nf6 3 c4 c6 4 Nc3 e6 5 e3 Nbd7 6 Qc2 b6 7 Bd2 Bb7 8 cxd5 exd5 9 Bd3 Be7 10 0-0 0-0 11 Ne5 [illegible] 14 Qd1 Bc8 15 Bc2 g6 16 Ne2 Nxe5 17 Bc3 Bf6 18 Nf4 Kg7 19 Qe2 a5 20 Rfd1 Ba6 21 Qe1 Rh8 22 e4 d4 23 Bxd4 Nf3+ 24 gxf3 Bxd4 25 Ng2 Rh3 26 Qd2 c5 27 Qf4 Be2 28 Re1 Rxf3 29 Rxe2 Rxf4 30 Nxf4 Qg5+ 31 Ng2 Rh8 32 Resigns.

No 2513



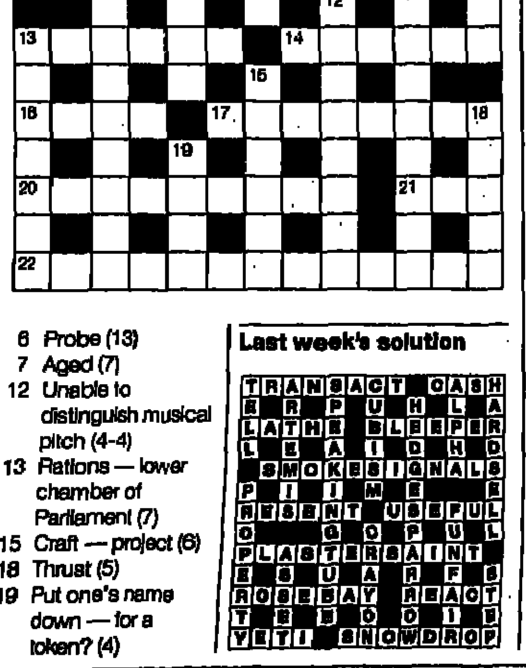
Xie v Ioseliani, later in the same game. Black has missed her chance and now White (to play) is ready for the final attack. Carelessness could still allow a back rank mate, so how does White win?

No 2512: 1 Rh8+ Resigns. If Kg7 2 Qd4+ Bf6 3 Qxf6+ Rxf6 4 Rh7+ Kf8 5 Nxf6+ wins a piece.

Quick crossword no. 408

Across

1 Rusty (3,2,8)
8 Title (3)
9 Abused — annoyed (9)
10 Sample (8)
11 Russian emperor (4)
13 Tax — bill (6)
14 Line of action — insurance document (6)
16 Fitting — encounter (4)
17 U.S. national game (8)
20 Compliance (9)
21 Tavern (3)
22 Be unwilling to commit oneself (3,2,3,5)



Down

1 Fertile spot in desert (5)
2 Equestrian contest in sections (5-3,5)
3 Pink and red wading bird (8)
4 Teased — being scruffily dressed (6)
5 Cut — a piece of film (4)
6 Probe (13)
7 Aged (7)
12 Unable to distinguish musical pitch (4-4)
13 Rations — lower chamber of Parliament (7)
15 Craft — project (6)
18 Thrust (5)
19 Put one's name down — for a token? (4)

Last week's solution

Bridge Zia Mahmood

THE Cap Gemini tournament in Holland in January has always been one of my favourites. This isn't simply because I've now won the event four times, but because of the wonderful atmosphere and the peerless hospitality of our Dutch hosts.

The Dutch Bridge Federation has more than 100,000 members, so the Cap Gemini audience is always enthusiastic and knowledgeable.

I mentioned a few weeks ago that I was playing with Tony Forrester, Britain's number-one player and the bridge correspondent of the Daily Telegraph. He must have taken to heart my remark that if he did anything foolish, it would appear in the Guardian, because he played exceptionally well throughout.

We got off to a very fast start, but in the later stages of the event we found our opponents in tremendous form, and it was all we could do to hang on to a narrow lead at the end. Having begun with a number of convincing victories, we in fact lost six of our last seven matches, but we lost them by small enough margins that no other pair was able to mount a successful challenge.

This deal, with Tony as declarer, was crucial to our chances. Looking at the North-South hands, try to predict which of declarer's cards will win the thirteenth and decisive trick in 3NT.

North
♠ 9 8 3
♥ A 8 7 6 3
♦ K
♣ A 9 8 6

West
♠ 6 5
♥ J 9
♦ 10 9 8 7 4 3
♣ Q 5 3

East
♠ A Q J 10
♥ Q 10 5 4
♦ Q J 2
♣ 7 4

South
♠ K 7 4 2
♥ K 2
♦ A 6 5
♣ K J 10 2

The bidding had been:

South	West	North	East
Tony		Zia	
			1♣
Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥
Dble	2♦	2♥	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♦	Pass	3♥	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

a complicated auction because our opponents were playing the Polish Club system and we, a first-time partnership, weren't exactly on familiar ground when it came to defending against this method! Tony received a diamond lead from West which he won with dummy's king. East unblocked the Queen. Understandably, Tony now played a club to his ten — but the opening bidder wasn't kind enough to hold the queen, so West took the trick and continued with a second diamond to East's jack, which Tony had to duck.

Now East made the natural-looking switch to the queen of spades (a heart switch, difficult to find, would defeat the contract). Tony won the trick with the king of spades and cashed the ace of diamonds. He then ran his club tricks, on the last of which East came under intolerable pressure. Forced to keep the hearts, or else the whole suit would run, East had to discard one heart and one spade on the clubs. Now Tony played the nine of spades from dummy to East's jack and his own four. Winning the heart return with the ace in dummy, Tony played the eight of spades to the ace and seven. East played another heart, but Tony won with the king and, with a showman's flourish, revealed his thirteenth card — the master two of spades!

Cricket West Indies v England, fourth Test

England blasted to defeat

Mike Selvey in Georgetown

DISPIRITED and demoralised, England on Monday followed one of their best days of the series with their worst, losing the fourth Test by 242 runs. Having been asked to make 380 to win the match — or to bat for five sessions to save it — they realistically had two chances of doing so, slim and none. Slim, though, had already saddled his horse and ridden out of town, and they were dismissed inside 63 overs for 137.

It was England's misfortune to come up against the relentless, surging power of Curtly Ambrose and Courtney Walsh at its most compulsive. In an irresistible opening burst packed full of menace they knocked the top off the England innings, reducing it to the rubble of 28 for four.

Ordeal by spin followed before the magnificent pair returned for the finale, which came in the last scheduled over of the day when, with every fielder crouched round the bat, Dean Headley sliced a drive into the hands of Shivnarine Chanderpaul, the man of the match, at fourth slip to give Ambrose his fourth wicket. The giant bowler followed through, plucked a stump from the ground and waved it in celebration like a giant toothpick.

Simply two great fast bowlers had turned it on when it was needed. Ageing they clearly are but they have a combined Test tally of almost 700 wickets and the fire still burns. Ambrose finished with four for 38, and Walsh three for 25, including that of Mark Ramprakash, who batted for almost two hours to top-score once more with 34. Carl Hooper mopped up in the middle with his offspin, taking three for 31.

The true damage to England had been done on the first day when Brian Lara won the toss and chose to bat on a dry pitch that deteriorated from the second day. Lara's 93 and Chanderpaul's 118 helped the home side to a first innings total of 352. England's reply of 170, including a vital innings of 64 not out by Ramprakash to avert the follow-on, was never enough. Their hopes rose on Sunday when they reduced the West Indies to 127 for nine, but a record-breaking last-wicket partnership of 70 between Ian Bishop and Dinanath Ramnarine crushed that wistful dream. It was followed by a surgical incision with the new ball.

Paul Weaver in Durban writes: The number 69 had already acquired some significance during Pakistan's cricket tour of South Africa. In Johannesburg it was the name of the nightclub that some members of the touring side allegedly spent an evening when they claimed they were being mugged.

At Kingsmead on Monday it was the number of runs South Africa needed from their last two wickets to pull off an improbable victory, having been 133 for eight.

In the end Pakistan won by 29 runs, beating South Africa in a Test match for the first time in six attempts, and giving them a 1-0 lead in the three-match series. It took just 43 minutes for them to complete a deserved victory but in that time aggressive batting from Mark Boucher and Fanie de Villiers cast much doubt on the outcome of a memorable match.

On Sunday evening the pair had put on 53 in a brave hour. They added another 24 in the first four overs on Monday. But shortly after the new ball was taken, Boucher was bowled by Waqar Younis, and Allan Donald quickly followed.

Mushtaq Ahmed, with six for 78 and match figures of nine for 149, was the man of the match.

Pakistan: 259 and 226;
South Africa: 231 and 225.
Pakistan won by 29 runs

Football Premiership

Collymore given new lease of life

Martin Thorpe

IT IS a sign of the Anfield times that a new manager can beat Liverpool in his first game and then say: "That's the easy bit done." This Liverpool team is indeed a poor copy of previous scarlet masterpieces. But John Gregory was referring to the challenge ahead.

The latest volunteer to sit in Doug Ellis's ejector seat, following the resignation of Brian Little, enjoyed a pretty heady afternoon. Not only did he inspire the team to a 2-1 victory and their season's most commited performance but he even managed to direct a couple of squirts of damp-start into Stan Collymore's engine and end Liverpool's realistic title hopes too.

Gregory, the former Villa coach who left to manage Wycombe Wanderers 16 months ago, has been around the block enough, though, to know it may be downhill from here in the rally against relegation.

Judging by last Saturday's media performance Gregory is a self-assured, sensible character even if his record as a manager remains questionable.

He will be particularly keen to avoid the problems which forced out his predecessor, though no one is sure what they were. Last Sunday Brian Little said he knew he had to go when he noticed the players "were a bit sheepish towards me" — a bit of a woolly reason.

A nice bloke, though, Little; similarly Roy Evans. But he too looks destined to lose his job, like Little amid rumours that he has problems enforcing discipline among his players. "Realistically the best we can look for now is a place in Europe this season," said the Liverpool manager, conceding the title.

Let's get physical . . . Collymore tussles with Ince for possession at Villa Park last Saturday
PHOTO: PAUL MARRIOTT

Last Saturday his team, though admittedly missing key players, also lacked power, penetration and defensive certainty. Over the season, though, inconsistency has perhaps been Liverpool's greatest crime, and on Saturday the referee decided to continue the theme.

First Graham Poll failed to send off the Villa goalkeeper Mark Bosnich for bringing down Oyvind Leonhardsen. Michael Owen put Liverpool ahead from the spot but further injustice was heaped on Liverpool on 61 minutes when Mr Poll, normally a punctilious red-carder, failed to dismiss Collymore for a second bookable offence — pulling back Steve McManaman — after earlier showing him the yellow card for a foul on Paul Ince.

Perhaps Mr Poll was too mindful of the circumstances: Collymore geed up against the club he had left amid such animosity and the visiting fans booing his every touch. Five minutes later Collymore scored Villa's winner, tapping in after Ian Taylor's shot hit a post. He had equalised on 10 minutes after the Liverpool defence failed to clear Simon Grayson's cross.

If Gregory can manage what Evans and Little could not and spark Collymore into perpetual life, then Villa's new manager can claim success on that feat alone.

Football results

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP: Aston Villa 2, Liverpool 1; Barnsley 2, Wimbledon 1; Blackburn Rovers 5, Leicester City 3; Chelsea 0, Manchester United 1; Crystal Palace 0, Coventry City 3; Derby County 3, Sheffield Wednesday 0; Everton 0, Newcastle United 0; Leeds United 0, Southampton 1; Tottenham Hotspur 1, Bolton 0; West Ham United 0, Arsenal 0. **Leading positions:** 1, Man Utd (played 28-points 59); 2, Arsenal (26-48); 3, Blackburn (27-48).

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE: Division One: Bury 1, Swindon 0; Charlton 1, Huddersfield 0; Crewe 1, Reading 0; Man City 1, WBA 0; Norwich 0, QPR 0; Notts Forest 4, Middlesbrough 0; Oxford 3, Stockport 0; Portsmouth 1, Tranmere 0; Port Vale 0, Stoke 0; Sheffield Utd 2, Bradford 1; Sunderland 2, Ipswich 2; Wolves 1, Birmingham City 3. **Leading positions:** 1, Notts Forest (34-68); 2, Middlesboro (34-68); 3, Sunderland (33-62).

Division Two: Blackpool 2, Fulham 1; Bournemouth 0, Preston 2; Brentford 1, York City 2; Bristol City 1, Southend 0; Carlisle 2, Burnley 1; Northampton Town 2, Grimsby 1: Oldham Athletic 1, Millwall 1; Plymouth 0, Luton 2; Watford 3, Bristol Rovers 2; Wigan 2, Chesterfield 1; Wrexham 2, Walsall 1; Wycombe 1, Gillingham 0. **Leading positions:** 1, Watford (34-70); 2, Bristol City (35-68); 3, Northampton Town (35-55).

Division Three: Barnet 1, Shrewsbury 1; Brighton 3; Chester 2; Cambridge 2, Mansfield Town 0; Darlington 1, Rochdale 0; Hartlepool 3, Doncaster 1; Macclesfield 2, Notts Co 0; Rotherham 2, Leyton O 1; Scarborough 2, Hull City 1; Scunthorpe 3, Cardiff 3; Swansea 2, Exeter 1; Torquay United 3, Lincoln City 2. **Leading positions:** 1, Notts County (35-76); 2, Torquay United (35-62); 3, Macclesfield (35-61).

BELL'S SCOTTISH LEAGUE: Premier Division: Aberdeen 0, Kilmarnock 0; Dunfermline P, Motherwell P; Hibernian 0, Celtic 1; Rangers 2, Hearts 2; St Johnstone 1, Dundee U 1. **Leading positions:** 1, Celtic (27-58); 2, Hearts (27-56); 3, Rangers (27-54).

First Division: Airdrie P, Falkirk P; Ayr 2, Partick 2; Dundee 1, St Mirren 0; Hamilton P, Raith P; Stirling A 2, Morton 2. **Leading positions:** 1, Dundee (27, 58); 2, Falkirk (26, 45); Raith (25-42).

Second Division: East Fife 1, Clyde 1; Forfar 0, Clydebank 0; Livingston P, Queen of the South P; Stenhousemuir 0, Inverness CT 3; Stranraer P, Brechin P. **Leading positions:** 1, Clydebank (26-49); 2, Livingston (24-40); 3, Queen of the South (25-35).

Third Division: Berwick 0, Arbroath 0; Dumbarton 0, Alloa 3; East Stirling P, Queens Pk P; Montrose 3, Cowdenbeath 1; Ross Co P, Albion P. **Leading positions:** 1, Alloa (25-50); 2, Arbroath (25-44); 3, East Stirling (25-41).

Sports Diary Mike Kiely

French prove reluctant hosts

WORLD CUP 98: you've eaten the chocolate bars, digested the website, even mastered the video game. But, of course, there's no substitute for the real thing, so how about experiencing the greatest show on earth at first-hand. Easier said than done, I'm afraid.

Before a ball has even been kicked, the French Organising Committee (CFO) has run into off-the-field problems, with the associations of several leading European powers unhappy over the allocation of tickets. "It's worse than we expected," said David Davies, the Football Association's director of external affairs, after it emerged that England will receive a mere 9,128 tickets in total for England's three first-phase games, against Tunisia, Romania and Colombia.

Scotland will receive only 2,000 tickets for their group matches against Norway and Morocco, and 5,000 for their opening game at the Stade de France against the world champions Brazil.

The root of the problem lies in the CFO's policy of giving preferential treatment to French citizens in purchasing tickets. Now the German, Italian, Belgian and Dutch associations are expected to join the English and Scots in lobbying Fifa for a more generous allocation, amid fears that black market operators and large numbers of ticketless fans making the journey will represent a considerable security threat around the stadiums this summer.

On the pitch, this year's FA Cup quarter-final line-up was confirmed after mid-week replays saw Barnsley beat favourites Manchester United 3-1 at Oakwell, and Arsenal knock out London neighbours Crystal Palace 2-1 at Selhurst Park. The full draw is: Coventry City v Sheffield United; Leeds United v Wolverhampton Wanderers; Arsenal v West Ham United; Newcastle United v Barnsley. Ties to be played on March 7/8.

THE African Nations Cup in Burkina Faso was a triumph for Egypt, who defeated defending champions South Africa 2-0 in Ouagadougou. But South Africa and the continent's three other qualifiers for the World Cup — Tunisia, Morocco and Cameroon, all of whom failed to get past the quarter-finals — did nothing to suggest Africa at present has a team capable of winning the ultimate prize.

ENGLAND prop Phil Vickery is in line for a Calcutta Cup call-up later this month after his suspension for punching Colin Charvis of Wales was quashed on appeal by the Five Nations Committee. Vickery was cited by the Welsh Rugby Union after making his top-flight début in last month's international at Twickenham and was given a 30-day punishment. Meanwhile the Rugby Football Union has announced that Kevin Yates of Bath will not appeal against a six-month suspension imposed for allegedly biting an opponent's ear during a match against London Scottish. However, the RFU would not comment on reports that Yates would appeal to the High Court.

BRITAIN made a great leap forward in the medal stakes at the European Indoor Athletics Championships in Valencia when Jonathan Edwards and Ashia Hansen picked up gold medals in the triple jump. Hansen, born in the USA but now domiciled in Birmingham, set a new world record of 15.16m. Barnsley-born John Mayock claimed the 3,000 metres title.

THE inaugural Guardian Direct Cup, played in London's Battersea Park, was won by Yevgeny Kafelnikov, who beat Cedric Pioline 7-5, 6-4. The event proved a disappointment for British tennis fans who saw Greg Rusedski and Tim Henman fail to profit from home advantage. Rusedski went out in the first round to Marc-Kevin Goellner while Henman's challenge ended in a quarter-final defeat by Kafelnikov.

THE race for the 1998 Formula One world championship is hotting up ahead of the first round at Melbourne's Albert Park this weekend, with Michael Schumacher and reigning champion Jacques Villeneuve firing on all cylinders in the PR battle. "Obviously Mr Villeneuve won the championship so he is the best at the moment. It is up to us to prove that is wrong," remarked the German. Villeneuve countered: "Under stress, Schumacher stops thinking and only reacts. I am not interested in getting to know him. I cannot relate to anything he does."

Shiv Sharma is on holiday

